



Page 2

This photo is not from a hosta show, but I thought I'd share it with you anyway. While I was in Japan, I visited a personal exhibition of kokedama. Kokedama is a balled up mass of soil covered with moss. It was amazing to see many different plants, even a little Japanese maple tree, growing beautifully out of these little balls of soil and moss. The photo is *H. venusta* planted in kokedama. A blue hosta leaf under the ball added a nice accent.



Hybridizing in Japan

Because hostas grow in the wild there, only the selected wild-collected sports were considered to be of the highest value in Japan for a long time. Hybrids held low status and were of little interest to serious collectors. In recent years, however, influenced by the many beautiful new varieties from Western countries, some Japanese collectors began crossing and creating their own new hybrids, working with the wild-collected plants primarily. Muroi-san, Gonokami-san and Fukatsu-san are among these hybridizers.



Let's take a look at some of their original hybrids:



Pictures above are of as-yet-unnamed longipes hybrids created by Muroi-san

'Seizan' by Muroi-san



'Gonokami-no-hana', 'Gonokami-no-hagoromo', 'Gonokami-no-sekirei', and 'Gonokami-no-shiranami' all from Gonokami-san



'Gonokami-no-shirokujaku' and 'Gonokami-no-unakai', both from Gonokami-san

'Yoshino-midori' and 'Ki-renjyaku' both from Fukatsu-san



at left is a flower of 'Hi-renjyaku' by Fukatsu-san

'Ki-renjyaku' is a powdery yellow hosta. Both 'Ki-renjyaku' and 'Hi-renjyaku' bear double flowers. Unlike the few double-flowered hostas we know of in the West, they are stable and easy to grow according to the originator Fukatsu-san.



More Photos from Japan

Did I hear you'd like to see more giboshi photos?

Your wish is my command!



As in the West, Japan's hosta enthusiasts enjoy taking many photos of their plants, and collectors there have many interesting and beautiful hostas that have never been seen outside of Japan. These are shown on personal websites and photo-sharing sites that are all written in Japanese, so they can be very difficult for people who cannot read the language to find. Below are more Japanese hybrids pictured on these sites for your viewing pleasure.



'Bukou Kokuryu'



'Chirifu Shima Ryusei'



'Daido Nishiki'



'Hakutei'



'Hagi-no-mai'



'Hyakka-no-homare'



'Kihachijo'



'Koutei'



'Kogane Fuji'



'Moroyama Nishiki'



'Nakatsu'



'Taisi-no-sakazuki'



Conclusion

I hope you enjoyed these beautiful hosta photos from Japan.



Japanese hosta collecting and showing is concerned with not only with the hosta leaves, but also with the plant's shape, color, flowers, and the balance of them all. The containers in which they are displayed and even the soil are also important. Everything associated with the hosta must be in harmony – that's the Japanese way of gardening.

Growing these hostas takes a lot of work, time, and patience. Some rare cultivars can be quite challenging to grow. Most of my friends mentioned that they try to keep the growing conditions as close as possible to their natural habitat in terms of soil, fertilizer, watering, etc.

One friend told me it's his dream to build a rock wall and grow his favorite Iwa Giboshi (*H. longipes*) there. Even with the best care, however, some hosta sports do not grow well, revert to the original forms, or in other ways do not meet expectations. Another hosta friend of mine gave up collecting the species forms as they required lots of care and he no longer had enough time.

The hostas in this article are not registered with the ICRA. Although Japanese is my first language, I am not an expert in transliterating hosta names, not to mention the rules of the ICNCP. Sometimes even the same name is spelled or pronounced differently by different people. Because of this, you may find the same hostas under slightly different spellings or names in the HostaLibrary or in the *Hostapedia*. Despite the confusion this may cause, these are some of the most beautiful hostas I have seen anywhere and I thought readers of *The Online Hosta Journal* might appreciate the chance to see some of the wonders of my native country.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my hosta friends in Japan. You call someone by the "last name + san" in Japan, instead of the first name, regardless of gender. So here goes: Thank you, Eikawa-san, Fukatsu-san, Gonokami-san, Hirano-san, Kondo-san, Muroi-san, Sasaki-san and Yamaoka-san for the information I needed to write this article, and thank you for digging up the photos. I know you went through hundreds, if not thousands, of hosta pictures to select these. 🌱



New Author Bio:



I was born in Sapporo, Hokkaido, the northern-most island of Japan, and grew up in Iwamizawa which is about 40 kilometers, or 25 miles from Sapporo. I met Bob while he was in the military, stationed in Hokkaido. We married and lived in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii for over 10 years. Our 2 sons, Will and Glenn, were both born in Hawaii.

After I settled down in New Jersey, I developed an interest in gardening. Phyllis, my sister-in-law, my mentor and hosta buddy, suggested at that time that I grow hostas for our shady garden. That's how my hosta addiction started.

Besides growing hostas, I also like taking pictures and spending time with my computer. I have a web site [Giboshi arekore](http://Giboshi.arkore.com).

Go to Page 1

[Next Article](#)
[Previous Article](#)
[Contents Page](#)