

CROSSROADS

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter May, 2014



Rhododendrons and Azaleas of Japan

Rhododendrons and azaleas, both from the genus *Rhododendron*, comprise ~1,000 species of woody shrubs and trees in the heath family. The name rhododendron comes from the Greek words "rodon" which means "rose" and "dendron" which means "tree", hence rose-tree. Most species are found in the Himalayas of Nepal and Sikkim to Yunnan and Sichuan. It is the national flower of Nepal, where it is considered edible and savoured for its sour flavour. Tropical rhododendrons are found from southeast Asia to northern Australia, with as many as 164 species in New Guinea. The latter are native to sub-alpine grasslands at around 3,000 metres above sea level in the Central Highlands. Significant areas of diversity are also found in the mountains of Korea, Japan and Taiwan. Comparatively few species occur in North America and Europe.

Rhododendron leaves are spirally arranged and are from 1-2 cm to over 50 cm in length. Typically the azaleas are smaller with narrow pointed leaves, while rhododendrons have large leathery leaves. They can be either evergreen or deciduous (varieties that drop their leaves in the fall). Rhododendrons are prized for their showy often strongly fragrant trumpet-shaped spring flowers. Multiple flowers, typically pink, purple, white, or red are usually borne on a single stalk as a compact cluster.

Some species of rhododendron are poisonous because of chemicals in their pollen and nectar. Grazing animals and people have been

known to become ill from eating honey produced by bees that have been visiting rhododendron and azalea flowers.

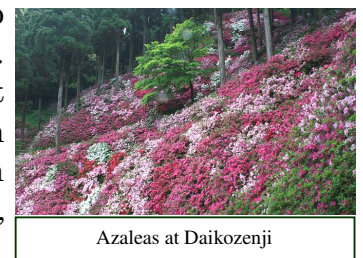
From Yakushima to Hokkaido, Japan is home to some of the most beautiful rhododendrons and azaleas in the world. There are about 100 species in Japan, many of which are restricted to mountain regions. There are even alpine azaleas that grow as low mat-forming plants putting forth tiny clusters of pink flowers only a few millimeters across. One of the great colorful spectacles of Japan can be seen by venturing into the mountain forests and high country throughout the month of May.

Most of the cultivated rhododendrons in Japanese cities and gardens, which have been an integral part of Japanese landscape design for centuries, came originally from China.

Japanese refer to azaleas as "tsutsuji". Among the best known sites in Japan for viewing azalea in blossom is Daikozenji, the "tsutsuji temple", in northern Kyushu, and the Shugakuin Imperial Villa in Kyoto.



Japanese Azaleas



Azaleas at Daikozenji

Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS? Try our *lessons through the net!*

SITE OF THE MONTH:

Here's how to landscape with rhododendrons and azaleas, western-style:

<http://www.tjhsst.edu/~dhvatt/azaleas/new/landscaping.html>

Article by Kenneth

Some Thoughts for the Month



Joshua Says: Cyril and Stephanie will be leaving us and returning to France this month after a year teaching French with us. Everyone, students, staff and friends, are disappointed to see them leave, but we all wish them a “bon voyage” and the best of good fortune for their future. Their French lessons will be taken over by Danielle who has been teaching French for many years.

Junko Says: Although it's the last month of spring, May is the best month to enjoy blossoming flowers. And the various kinds of flowers given to us by students and friends of CR are a joy to see. As this is also the end of our semester, we will hold our E-O-S party on the 31st. This is a great time to enjoy communication with our teachers and staff and other students in our school. I look forward to seeing many of you on this night also.



Kenneth Says: Many years ago on a hiking trip to Mt. Kuju in Kyushu with friends from Canada over Golden Week I was struck by the dazzling pink shrubs along the forest trail to the top of the mountain. Recently, we hiked with our family to the top of Saragamine that overlooks the city of Matsuyama, and there they were again. Gorgeous!

Adrienne Says: It is the season for harvesting “itadori” again. This tall weed with the thick stalk grows in our garden. Itadori resembles an American plant called “rhubarb” in both taste and appearance. Rhubarb is used in baking pies and cakes in my country, and I tried making a rhubarb-strawberry pie, substituting itadori for rhubarb. It was pretty good. I wonder how Japanese people cook itadori.



Stephanie and Cyril Dit: *Japonaises, japonais, c'est avec beaucoup d'émotion que Stéphanie et moi vous disons au revoir. Le Japon a tenu toutes ses promesses: aussi beau et riche (en histoire, en figurines, en cerisiers, en bentos...) que nous l'imaginions, et même plus! Cependant, nous arrivons au terme de notre visa et il est temps de retourner en France... pour l'instant! Nous espérons revenir à Matsuyama plus tard, car nous sommes tombés amoureux de cette ville. En attendant cet heureux moment, nous allons essayer de retenir nos larmes et d'emporter avec nous tout ce bonheur et cette sublime expérience que votre pays nous a offerts.*



NOTICE BOARD

The 1st End-Of-Semester party for 2014



.... Is going to be held on Saturday, May 31st - this month! We start from 7:30pm. Come along, join in, relax and chat with your classmates, teachers and other CR trainees. Invite your friends and families to join us, too!



It will be a B-Y-O (bring your own) event, but if you are too busy to prepare something you can pay a small fee instead.



Look for posters around the school or ask Junko for details.



See you there!!



Pet's Corner Surf's Up!

It's getting close to summer in the northern hemisphere and soon many people will be heading for the beaches all around the world to do some surfing. ... And their pets won't be left out of the fun as these photos show. ...



There is even a dog surfing championship held every year in California

* Not to let the dogs have all the fun, here is "Nicolas" the cat "hang'in five", and her owner Domingo, from Lima, S. America.

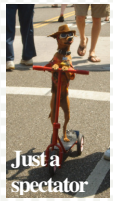


* And here's another of Domingo's surfing buddies. His pet Alpaca can surf with the best of 'em.

* "Goatee" the goat from Prismo Beach, California knows how to "hang ten" too.



* And to top it all off, meet the mighty surfing mouse! Australian Shane Wilmott has trained thee of his little friends in the fine arts!



Just a spectator



Don't forget... Our SPECIAL 1+1 Campaign offer! Up to 50% off!!

See our notice board, or ask Junko in our office, for the details.