

❁ Features of Higo Iris ❁

What makes it different from other irises?

A tall stem, large petals, and big center

Three or six large petals that spread out widely.

The small petals at the center stand up, creating a beautiful silhouette

❁ Colors of Higo Iris ❁ 60% are white

White Dark blue Violet Reddish purple etc.



Color clarity is paramount!

There are many varieties such as single color, bicolor, color fringing, and stripes.

❁ How many subtypes are there?

There are 1,296 different cultivated varieties that Mangetsu-Kai has registered as of 2015.

❁ History of the Higo Iris ❁

The founder of Higo Iris is Yoshida Junnosuke (1786-1870)

1830's Yoshida Junnosuke, a Higo domain retainer studied cultivation secrets under Shogunal retainer Matsudaira Sakingo (Sho-Oh) by request of the 10th Hosokawa Lord of the Higo Domain, Hosokawa Narimori, and received seeds, plants and records on how to grow irises.

Junnosuke promised not to remove flowers or seeds from the group.

More than 10 Higo Clan retainers started cultivating irises.

1826-1860 "Hanaren" groups met at night on the 16th day of each month because the moonlight was so bright they didn't need a lantern on their way home.

Breeding and growing methods continued to progress.

1886 The "Mangetsu-Sha" group is formed.

Together they put all their effort into cultivating irises and produced new varieties and growing methods.

1893 The group renamed to "**Kumamoto Hanashobu Mangetsu-Kai**" and continues to operate to this day.

Higo Iris

They usually bloom from late May through mid-June



❁ Appreciating Higo Iris ❁

Normally, Higo Iris are grown in flower pots and displayed in a tatami room!

- ① Try standing and looking down at an angle for the best view of the center.
- ② Then try sitting and looking at it from a distance to admire the flower, leaves, pot, and overall figure.

**The flower only lasts 3 days!
Enjoy the 3 steps!**

1st day: Starts blooming 2nd day: Expands
3rd day: Full bloom!



❁ Now in Bloom ❁

About 2,000 Higo Irises are planted in **Shohin-Ken** in Yatsushiro City.

Irises are also planted in **Suizenji Jojuen Garden, the Zoological and Botanical Gardens and the Higo Hosokawa Garden in Tokyo.**



❁ 2024 Potted Iris Exhibition ❁

At Kumamoto Castle * There's a possibility that schedule may be modified.
From late May to mid-June



❁ Mangetsu-Kai's Prohibition on Taking Higo Irises out of the Group - Keeping Junnosuke's promise and preserving the purity of the true Higo Iris-

All the plants and seeds belong to the group, and members may not give them to anyone.

When a member leaves the group, they have to give the plants and seeds back.

1910's A Tokyo University professor reported that "The Higo Iris is unlike any other flower in not only in Japan but in the world" at the International Botanical Congress.

→Higo Iris became well known worldwide.

→The group received a proposal to enter the iris at the 1929 Paris Expo but refused to keep their promise.

1930 American Iris Society asked the group for one of the plants but was denied.

The Kumamoto Hanashobu Mangetsu-Kai continues to observe this rule to this day.

Through the hard work of Mangetsu-Kai members, the true varieties of Higo Iris continue to be preserved.

※ Flowers sold under the name Higo Irises are a botanically different plant and are not recognized by Mangetsu-Kai.

Flower Features

Big center (the pistil)
Single layer of petals
Clear color

Let's see what makes each flower distinct!

Carrying on the Tradition

Strong traditionalists in Kumamoto known as "Higo Mokkos" have carefully preserved the methods of cultivation, formation and appreciation of potted plants, flowerbeds and bonsai.

What a profound craft!

History of Higo Rokka

Beginning in the 1700s, The 6th Hosokawa Lord of the Domain, **Hosokawa Shigekata (1720-1785)** encouraged samurai in Kumamoto Domain to grow to practice self-discipline.

In the 1800s, during the reign of 10th-generation Hosokawa Narimori (1804-1860), the samurai formed groups called 'Hanaren' to establish new varieties of flowers and set rules to grow them.

Taking flowers and seeds out of the group was prohibited!

In 1960, six of these special varieties of flower were selected throughout the seasons for an exhibition that would be held in presence of the Emperor.

These six types of flower have been collectively called 'Higo Rokka' ever since.

Precious Treasures of Kumamoto

The six unique kinds of flowers cultivated by the samurai of the Higo Domain



Higo Peony



Higo Iris



Higo Camellia

Higo Rokka

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Iris Season



Higo Morning Glory



Higo Sasanqua



Higo Chrysanthemum

Let's learn about Higo Rokka!

This leaflet was created by
Green Meisters of Kumamoto City
Team てんとうむし(Ladybug)



We support preservation and cultivation of Higo Rokka!

Kumamoto City Team Tentomushi

Search

Higo Rokka Blooming Calendar

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
From mid-February to the end of March											
Higo Camellia ひごつばき Can be found at the Zoological and botanical Gardens, Prefectural Athletic Park, Suizenji Jojuen Garden, Country Park in Kumamoto and Higo Hosokawa Garden in Tokyo * Exhibition at Zoological and Botanical Garden											
From late April through early May											
Higo Peony ひごしゃくやく Can be found at the Zoological and Botanical Gardens, Suizenji Jojuen Garden in Kumamoto, Higo Hosokawa Garden in Tokyo and Kyuhoji Ryokuchi Park in Osaka * Exhibition at Suizenji Jojuen Garden, Tsukawara Museum											
From late May through mid-June											
Higo Iris ひごはなしょうぶ Can be found at Shohinken garden, the Zoological and Botanical Gardens, Suizenji Jojuen Garden in Kumamoto and Higo Hosokawa Garden in Tokyo * Exhibition at Kumamoto Castle											
From July to September											
Higo Morning Glory ひごあさがお * Exhibition at Kumamoto Castle, Suizenji Jojuen Garden, Kumamoto Shintoshin Plaza, Koraimon Gate											
From mid-November through early December											
Higo Chrysanthemum ひごぎく Can be found at Suizenji Jojuen Garden * Exhibition at Kumamoto Castle, Kumamoto Shintoshin Plaza Suizenji Jojuen Garden, Higo Hosokawa Garden in Tokyo											
From November through December											
Higo Sasanqua ひござんか Can be found at the Zoological and Botanical Gardens, Suizenji Jojuen Garden, Prefectural Athletic Park in Kumamoto and Higo Hosokawa Garden in Tokyo * Exhibition at Suizenji Jojuen Garden											

Higo Rokka are often used as designs in Kumamoto

← A manhole cover with a Higo Camellia design

