

Higo Iris

Blooms from Late May through Mid-June

❁ 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



❁ How many subtypes are there?

There are **1,296** different cultivated varieties

that Mangetsu-Kai has registered as of 2015.

❁ What Colors are there? 60% are white

White Dark blue Violet Reddish purple etc.



There are many varieties such as single color, bicolor, outer ring, and other irregular patterns.

Color clarity is paramount!



❁ 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 promises to keep the Higo Iris confidential**

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.

❁ Appreciating Higo Iris ❁

Normally, Higo Iris is grown in a flower pot 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!

❁ Let's View the Iris !

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

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



Exhibition at Suizenji Jojuen in June 2022

❁ Potted Iris Exhibition ❁

Kumamoto Castle : Castle Keeps' Square, Josaien and Ninomaru Rest Station

From late May to mid-June

* There's a possibility that schedule may be modified.



❁ Mangetsu-Kai's Rule of Higo Iris Confidentiality ❁

-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. Plants and seeds must be returned when a member leaves the group!

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

→ Higo Iris became well known worldwide.

→ The group received a proposal to enter the Higo Iris at the 1929 Paris Expo, but refuses to keep their promise of confidentiality.

In 1930, the American Iris Society request for seeds is denied due to the group regulations.

Kumamoto Hanashobu Mangetsu-Kai continues to observe this role to this day.

Shohin-Ken is the only location permitted to plant Higo Iris in the ground.

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

The Higo-Style Iris that is for general sale is not owned by the Mangetsu-Kai.

<Contact> **Kumamoto City Flower and Green Coordination Section**
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❀ Precious Treasures of Kumamoto ❀

The six varieties of traditional flowers unique to Kumamoto cultivated by the Higo samurai during the Edo period

2026 Vol.3
Late May–Mid–June



Higo Peony

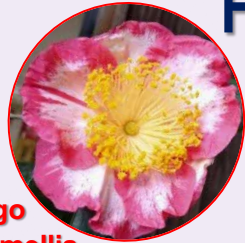


Higo Iris



Higo Morning Glory

Did you know?
Higo Rokka



Higo Camellia



Higo Sasanqua



Higo Chrysanthemum

❀ Center of the Flower! ❀

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

Let's see what makes each flower distinct!

❀ Carrying on Tradition & Spirit! ❀

The spirit of "Higo mokkosu" has preserved the methods of cultivation, formation and appreciation of

Potted Plants, Flowerbeds and Bonsai

The profound world of Higo Rokka!

Let's Learn More about Higo Rokka

created by Meisters of Greening in Kumamoto City Team てんとうむし (Ladybug)

We support the preservation, inheritance, and development of the Higo Rokka!



❀ History of Higo Rokka ❀

Beginning in the 1700s,

The 6th Hosokawa Lord of the Kumamoto Domain, Hosokawa Shigekata (1720-1785) **encouraged clansmen to practice horticulture as a form of self-discipline.**

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

Taking flowers, seedlings, or seeds out of the group was prohibited!

In 1960, six flower varieties that could be enjoyed during all four seasons were selected for an exhibition held in the presence of the Emperor.

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

❀ Let's See the Higo Rokka! ❀

Blooming Calendar

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
		← From mid-February to early April									
		Higo Camellia ひごつばき									
		Can be found at the Zoological and Botanical Gardens, Prefectural Athletic Park, Suizenji Jojuen Garden, Country Park, Kumamoto Prefectural office, Former Kumamoto Residence of Koizumi Yakumo in Kumamoto and Higo-Hosokawa Garden in Tokyo									
		*Exhibition at Suizenji Jojuen Garden									
				↔ From late April through early May							
				Higo Peony ひごしやくやく							
				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 and 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, Koraimon Gate and Kumamoto City International Center							
						↔ From mid-November through early December					
				Higo Chrysanthemum ひごぎく							
				Can be found at Suizenji Jojuen Garden							
				*Exhibition at Kumamoto Castle, Suizenji Jojuen Garden and Kumamoto City International Center							
						↔ From November through December					
				Higo Sasanqua ひごさざんか							
				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							

*Exhibition dates and locations are subject to change or may be cancelled.

❀ Entry to the Higo Meika-en Flower Garden at Kumamoto Castle's Takenomaru is prohibited post-Kumamoto Earthquake.

The Rokka are observable at the exhibitions within the castle.



❀ Used in a Variety of Designs Too! ❀

Manhole: Higo Camellia (Kumamoto City Waterworks and Sewage Bureau)



Did you Know? Higo Rokka

Search