

The Kurume Azaleas- Part 1

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Brief History of the Kurume Azaleas

Creech (1989) and Okamoto et al. (2007) provides excellent descriptions of the origin of the Kurume Hybrid Azaleas. Here we will briefly describe their research findings. The first introduction of the Kurume Azaleas was made by Motozo Sakamoto, a retainer of the Kurume feudal clan during the late Edo Period (1850s). Some of his original introductions, such as ‘Kochonomai’, ‘Kurainohana’, and ‘Shakkyo’ still could be found in the Kurume trade (Kurume-shi Sakai Tsutsuji Sentaa, 2 undated). The name Kurume was given because many of these plants were distributed by farmers and nurserymen near and around the newly founded Kurume City (1899). The city itself is a prefect of Fukuoka City in Kyushu, Japan. These plants were originally collected from Mount Kirishima which houses three important evergreen azalea species: *Rhododendron sataense* Nakai (*Sata tsutsuji*), *R. kiusianum* Makino (*Miyama Kirishima tsutsuji*), and *R. kaempferi* Planch (*Yama tsutsuji*). Many of the original Kurume Azaleas may have been selections of *R. sataense* (*Sata tsutsuji*). The group’s color range is the same as in this species—white, purple, pink, and red. Later these three species were used to produce the modern-day Kurume Hybrids. The first descriptions of the Kurume Azaleas were recorded in gardening books about 320 years ago. New hybridization started about 180 years ago.

Kurume Hybrid plants are mostly low-to-mid size growing (4’-6’ in 20 years) with a handful growing up to 8’ in height. They are compact and persistent and shiny leafed. The flowers are mostly single and hose-in-hose with a couple being semi-double or double. They are much smaller in size (less than 2” in diameter or so) compared to the Satsuki, Mucronatum (Ryukyu), Hirado, possibly an *R. scabrum* G. Don (*Kerama tsutsuji*) hybrid group of evergreen azaleas with large flower sizes, and other Japanese evergreen hybrid groups.

Kurume-shi Sekai Tsutsuji Sentaa (Kurume City World Azalea Center) in one of their publications (2022) lists the Kurume Hybrids by periods as follows: the Edo (also called the Tokugawa) Period

(1603-1867)- 66 cultivars (e.g., ‘Agemaki’ (Wilson # 41, ‘Jose’), ‘Azuma Kagami’ (Wilson # 16, ‘Pink Pearl’); the Meiji Period (1868-1912)- 170 cultivars (e.g., ‘Ima Shojo’ (Wilson # 36, ‘Fascination’), ‘Osaraku’ (Wilson # 17, ‘Penelope’); the Taisho Period (1912-1926)- 33 cultivars (e.g., ‘Kagura’ (NA 45419), ‘Fukuhiko’ (NA #45440); and the Showa Period (1926-1989)- 57 cultivars (e.g. ‘Kunimitsu’ (NA 45423), ‘Gunki’ (NA 45419)). Since then, the Kurume Branch of the National Institute of Vegetables, Ornamental Crops and Tea, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), henceforth to be called the Kurume Research Station, scientists and others around Kurume City, have been producing the Kurume Hybrids. While the collection and hybridization were going on in the Kurume City and other parts of Fukuoka, Kyushu, there were parallel processes going on in the Edo (name of Tokyo until 1868) area of Japan with similar parentage as the ones in the Kurume Hybrids. However, these plants are not accepted as Kurume Hybrids; they are categorized as Edo Kirishima Tsutsuji group (2010). An old cultivar that is still available both in Japan and the West from the Edo Kirishima Group is called ‘Hinodegiri’ (‘Red Hussar’, Wilson #42).

While we thought the dust settled down on the origin of the Kurume Hybrids, there has been a new twist in the hypothesis that these hybrids are products of *R. kiusianum*, *R. sataense*, and *R. kaempferi*. More recently, new research indicates that *R. stenopetalum* (Hogg) Mabb (formerly *R. macrosepalum* Maxim) (*Mochi tsutsuji*), *R. ripense* Makino (Kishi tsutsuji), and their hybrids known as Ryukyu or *R. × Mucronatum* groups) may be important players in the original Kurume Hybrids. For example, Ueno et al (2005) used AFLP (Amplified Fragment Length Polymorphism) marker and suggested that *R. stenopetalum* and *R. ripense* are possible parents of some of the Kurumes because they contain this marker which is different from *R. sataense*, *R. kiusianum*, and *R. kaempferi*. Okamoto and Nonaka (1999) examined the stomatal shape of some Kurume cultivars and



Fig. 1-'Aioi' (syn. 'Fairy Queen'). Photo by Carolyn Beck



Fig. 2-Azuma Kagami (syn. 'Pink Pearl'). Photo by Carolyn Beck.



Fig. 3-'Fuji-no-asahi'. Photo by Carolyn Beck.

that of *R. stenopetalum* and *R. ripense* and found that the stomatal shape these cultivars possess are from the latter species.

Okamoto et al (2000a, b) found some Kurume cultivars carry the specific loci on the Aat-2 allele of aspartate aminotransferase in dormant flower buds. This does not exist in *R. sataense*, *R. kiusianum*, and *R. kaempferi*. They determined that this trait is derived from *R. stenopetalum* and *R. ripense*. These facts further support the view that both *R. stenopetalum* and *R. ripense* played an important role in the origin of some Kurume cultivars.

Passage of the Kurume Azaleas to the West

In the 1870s a few of these azaleas were imported from Belgium, England, Holland, or Japan as florists' azaleas (named as Belgian Indica Azaleas). The first collection of Kurume Azaleas was displayed in San Francisco in 1915 at the Pan Pacific Exposition by Kijiro Akashi. As it turns out, many of these plants, although brought from the Kurume area, were not Kurume Hybrids. Some of them were actually Mucronatum Hybrids, and yet some were either Hirado or Satsuki Hybrids. Since then, there have been five major introductions, one in England and four in the US between 1915-1976. The complete lists of these introductions can be found in Galle (1987) and most in Lee (1958).

The Domoto Brothers Introductions

The Domoto Brothers (Toichi and Kan Domoto) of Hayward, California were so impressed by these plants that they sent their father Kanetaro Domoto of the original Domoto Brothers, Inc. of Oakland, California to Japan to buy a large number of these plants. They received the exclusive right to propagate and distribute these plants. The Domoto Brothers gave exclusive rights to three major East Coast nurseries- the Bobbink & Atkins Nursery (Lambertus Bobbink & F.L. Atkins of East Rutherford, New Jersey), the Cottage Gardens Nurseries in Long Island, New York, and Henry A. Dreer, Inc. of Riverton, New Jersey. With the approval of the Domoto Brothers, these three nurseries together decided to give English names to these plants. Because of that, there has been a conundrum regarding these imported azaleas. Since all the records of these plants have been lost, it is not possible to correlate many of them with their Japanese origins. Some of these introduced plants were actually from other hybrid groups such as Mucronatum, Satsuki, etc. Some of

their introductions have vanished with the passage of time except in some old gardens.

Wilson's Fifty

The second formal collection was imported by Earnest H. Wilson, the famous plant explorer, who visited Kijiro Akashi's nursery in Kurume in 1918. He purchased 50 of the best Kurume selections and brought them to the Arnold Arboretum. They were given to the Royal Horticultural Society Gardens in Wisley, England and Thomas Welden of Richmond, Virginia. Wilson gave English names but kept their original Japanese ones. Except for one ('Hinodegiri'), the other 49 cultivars are true Kurume Hybrids (Okamoto, 2010). The cultivar 'Hinodegiri' is actually an Edo Kirishima Hybrid. The original Japanese names were retained with some spelling variations because of lack of Kanji characters and were assigned Wilson's numbers 1-50. Wilson further gave Western names to these 50 cultivars. They were all Kurume Hybrids and were also given accession numbers Wilson #1-50. Many of his collection are not around anymore. According to Okamoto, Wilson's 50 came from four different sources: 19 cultivars bred by Motozou Sakamoto and his associates; 29 cultivars bred from the Meiji to the Taisho era (1912-1926) at the Kurume facility; one cultivar ('Hinodegiri'), an Edo Kirishima Azalea from the Edo (current Tokyo) area; and a seedling of 'Osaraku' from the Korakuen Nursery in Korakuen City. Dr. Akihito Okamoto (2010) published a table in the article showing some inconsistencies in names, flower types and colors between the entries in the World Azalea Center of Kurume City and the Wilson Fifty list. He had the corrections intimated to the International Rhododendron Society earlier. We have incorporated his corrections in this article. As you will see, Galle (1987) did not have a chance to incorporate these changes.

The Stevenson Introductions

Between 1937 and 1938, J. B. Stevenson of England imported a large number of azaleas from Yokohama Nursery and K. Wada. He gave these plants to the now defunct Sunningdale Nursery of Surrey, England who grew and sold them mostly as florists azaleas. Many of these plants were actually not Kurume Hybrids, but Hirado, Sat-suki, and Mucronatum Hybrids. Unfortunately, many of these plants did not survive the English climate. Some of these plants were mislabeled or given English names so it is difficult to trace their groups. Some of the Japanese names he put for-



Fig. 4-'Fukuhiko'. Photo by Carolyn Beck.



Fig. 5-'Ima Shojo' (syn. 'Christmas Cheer'). Photo by Dr. Ajit Thakur.



Fig. 6-'Kintaiyou'. Photo by Carolyn Beck.



Fig. 7- 'Kirin' (syn. 'Coral Bells'). Photo by Dr. Ajit Thakur.



Fig. 8- 'Mizu-no-yamabuki'. Photo by Dr. Ajit Thakur.



Fig. 9- 'Osaraku' (syn. 'Penelope'). Photo by Dr. Ajit Thakur.

ward were distorted Japanese words (e.g., “Geisha” became “Gaeshi” in his document).

The USDA Introduction

R. Kent Beattie acquired originally 90 and later another 37 azaleas for the US Department of Agriculture’s Plant Introduction Section (Inventory No. 95) between the years 1929 and 1930. Out of these, 60 were Kurume Hybrids and the others mostly *Mucronatum*, *Satsuki*, and *Hirado* Hybrids. They were grown in the Department’s Glenn Dale, Maryland Plant Introduction Gardens and were assigned introduction numbers PI XXXXX. Among these 60 Kurumes, 49 were new and the other 11 were from the earlier introductions by the Domoto Brothers and Wilson. The Plant Introduction section retained the original Japanese names and also assigned the accession numbers beginning with PI. Most of the documents regarding these plants are not available anymore and many of these plants are not found in the nursery business. Lee’s *The Azalea Book* (Lee, 1958) lists most of these Beattie Kurume plants, some of which are not actually Kurume Hybrids.

The National Arboretum Introductions

Between the years of 1976 and 1978, Drs. John L. Creech and Frederic G. Meyer along with Sylvester G. March, with the help of Dr. Masaaki Kunishige of the Kurume Station and later Director of the Botanical Institute of Miya Prefecture, selected and imported 50 Kurume Hybrid azaleas that covered the entire color range of these hybrids from Kurume, Japan. Out of these 50 cultivars, 33 were released to a few selected nurseries and arboreta. They are mostly single and a few h/h flowering plants. Many of them display some color variations (sporting) like many of the *Satsuki* Azaleas. They retained the original Japanese names of these plants and assigned accession numbers as NA XXXXX. Many of them are still available from specialty growers. According to Dr. Kunishige, these 33 cultivars represent some of the best Kurume Hybrids. We have cross validated these NA XXXX series comparing against Japanese Kurume lists. Many of the National Arboretum Introductions can still be found in the gardens of some Azalea Society of America members.

Designations of Hybrids and Introductions

In the following list, the cultivars are given their proper designations as follow:

NA = The National Arboretum Introductions; PI = The Beattie Introductions; Wilson = The Wilson

50's; Domoto = The Domoto Brothers Introductions; Stevenson = The Stevenson Introductions. The others are identified by either the hybridizer or the importer's names.

Identifiable True Kurume Hybrids from Japan

'Agemaki' (syn 'Jose', Wilson #41); Purplish pink, single
 'Aioi' (syn 'Fairy Queen', Wilson #43)- Purplish pink, h/h
 'Akebono' (Domoto)- Red, h/h
 'Aratama' (NA 45406)- Red, single
 'Arziemakie' (Stevenson)- Yellowish-pink, darker spotting, single (flowers too large to be a Kurume; possibly a Mucronatum Hybrid)
 'Asa Gasumi' (syn 'Rosy Morn', Wilson #14)- Pale purplish pink, purplish red stripes, h/h
 'Asahi' (Beattie, PI 77089)- Purplish pink, single
 'Atsumi Zakura' (NA 45404)- Light red, h/h
 'Augigasana' (Stevenson)- Pale pink, deeper pink margin, brown blotch, single (possibly a Mucronatum Hybrid)
 'Aya no kanmuri' (in Japan) ('Aya no kamuri', Beattie, PI 77121- 'Aya kammuri' (syn 'Pinkie', Wilson #19)- Purplish pink, single
 'Ayagoromo' (Domoto)- Pink, single
 'Ayahime' (NA45405)- Reddish purple, single
 - 'Azuma Kagami' (syn 'Pink Pearl', Domoto- Wilson #16) - Pink, h/h
 'Azuma Shibori' (Beattie, PI 77076)- White, h/h
 'Benifude' (syn 'Sunbeam', Wilson #30; Beattie, PI 77069)- Pink, single
 'Bijinsui' (syn 'Little Imp', Wilson #13)- Purplish pink, single
 'Chigo no Mai' (Stevenson); Light red, pale red center, h/h
 'Chiyo no Akebono' (Domoto; Stevenson)- Purplish-pink, single
 'Choraku' (Stevenson)- Dark purplish red, red stripes, single
 'Ezonishiki' (misspelled as 'Ezoishiki'; NA 45415)- White, red flecks, h/h
 'Fudestukasa' (in Japan) (Stevenson misnamed it 'Fude Tsukata' (Stevenson)- Purple, h/h
 'Fudesutesan' (Domoto)- Deep yellowish-pink, single
 'Fudesute Yama' (syn 'Poppy', Wilson #35)- Red, single
 'Fuji Asahi' (NA 45438)- White flushed yellow, yellowish pink edges, h/h
 'Fukuhiko' (Stevenson; NA 45440)- Light red, red flecks, single
 'Gosho Zakura' (-sakura) (syn 'Vanity', Domoto; Wilson # 46)- purplish pink lighter center, single
 'Gunecho' (Domoto)- Purplish pink, single
 'Gunki' (NA 45422); White, red flecks, h/h
 'Hachika (aka Hatsuka) Tsugi' (syn 'Prudence', Wilson #7)- purplish pink, single
 'Hagoromo' (Domoto)- Light pink, single
 'Hakuo Nishiki' (NA 45436)- White, red flecks, h/h



Fig. 10-'Shizu-no-mai'. Photo by Carolyn Beck.

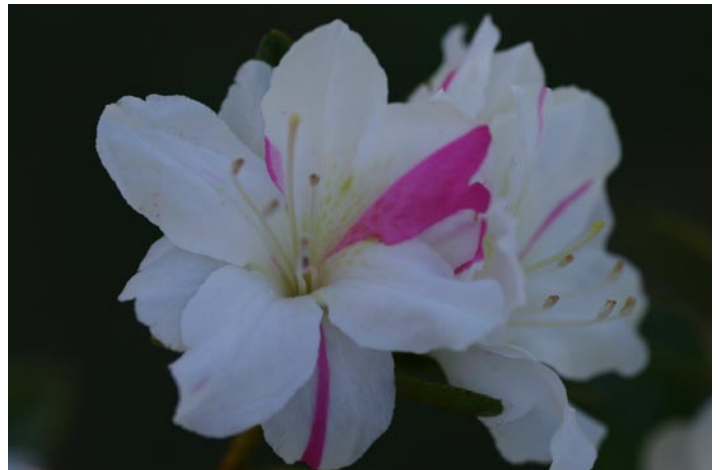


Fig. 11-'Tokoharu'. Photo by Carolyn Beck.



Fig. 12-'Wakaebisu'. Photo by Carolyn Beck.

'Hana Asobi' (syn 'Sultan', Wilson #50)- Reddish pink
 'Hanaikada' (Domoto)- Reddish-purple, single
 'Haru no Akebono' (Stevenson)- Light red, single
 'Haru no Kyoki' (Stevenson)- White, greenish buds, single
 'Haru no Sato' (misspelled by Stevenson as 'Had-no-Sato', Stevenson; NA45435)- Light reddish purple, h/h
 'Haru no Shiori' (in Japan) (misspelled by Stevenson as 'Haru no Shiou', Stevenson)- Purple, white eye, h/h
 'Harumuji' (Stevenson); White, single
 'Hatsunami' (Beattie, PI77075); Deep purplish-pink, single
 'Hime Kagami' (Domoto); White, reddish-purple flecks, h/h
 'Hino Hakama' (Beattie, PI 77126); Strong reddish-purple, single
 'Hino Tsukasa' (NA 45436); Red, single
 'Hinode' (Beattie, PI 77101); Deep purplish-pink, single
 'Hinodegiri' (syn 'Red Hussar', Wilson #42; 'Beni Giri', van Ness); Purplish red, single (**The Japanese horticulturists classify this cultivar as an Edo Kirishima Tsutsuji group member, not as a Kurume cultivar**)
 'Hinode no Kumo' (Stevenson); Red, single
 'Hinode no Taka' (syn 'Ruby', Wilson # 48); Purplish red, single
 'Hinomayo' (van Nes); Deep purplish-pink, single (too tall for a Kurume)
 'Hiyakkasen' (in Japan) ('Hiyakasen' or 'Hikkase', misspelled Japanese word, Stevenson); Light red, h/h
 'Hokorobi' (Beattie, PI 77125); White, flushed reddish-purple, single
 'Hou Ou' (in Japan) (syn 'Ho O', 'Apple Blossom', Domoto; Wilson #9)); White with purplish red stripes, single
 'Ima Murasaki' (NA 45408)- Purple, single
 'Ima Shojou' (in Japan) (Syn 'Christmas Cheer'- 'Imashojo', Domoto)- 'Fascination', Wilson # 36)- Red h/h
 'Ina Zuma' (in Japan) (Syn 'Ima Zuma', 'Chi no Ito', Stevenson)- White, red flecks, single
 'Irohayama' (in Japan) (syn 'Iro-ro Hayama' or 'Dainty', Wilson #8)- White margined light purple, single
 'Itten' (NA 45410; Stevenson)- Light purple, single
 'Iwato Kagami' (Domoto- NA 45411)- Light red, h/h
 'Izumi Kawa' (in Japan) (syn 'Izumigawa'; Stevenson)- Light purple, pale purple center, h/h
 'Kagura' (NA 45419)- Reddish purple, h/h
 'Kamakura' (Unknown introducer)- Carmine red, darker stripes, single
 'Kara Nishiki' (Beattie, PI 77084- NA 45420)- Light red, red flecks, single
 'Kasane Kagaribi' (syn 'Rosita', Wilson #32)- Yellowish pink, h/h
 'Katsura no Hana' (syn 'Ruth', Wilson #27)- Purplish pink, single
 'Kimigayo' (syn 'Cherub', Wilson #15)- Pink with lighter center, single
 'Kirin' (syn 'Coral Bells', Domoto- 'Daybreak', Wilson #22- 'Pink Beauty', Beattie, PI 77064)- Pink, h/h
 'Kiritsubo' (syn 'Twilight', Wilson #24)- Light purple, single
 'Ko Asobi' (Beattie PI 77089)- Red, single
 'Kogasane' (Beattie, PI77116) (The Kurume Hybrid by this name is red h/h in Japan)- Strong red, h/h
 'Kokinran' (Stevenson)- Yellowish-pink, white throat, red spots, single
 'Kokonoye' (in Japan) ('Kokonaye', Knap Hill- Stevenson)- Purple, pale purple center, h/h
 'Komachi' (Stevenson)- Reddish-purple, pale purple center, single
 'Komurasaki' (Beattie, PI 77127)- Light purple, single
 'Konohana' (NA 45425)- Strong red, pale red center, single
 'Koshikibu' (Beattie, PI 77139)- Light reddish purple, single
 'Kotsubo' (Beattie, PI 77133)- Purple, single
 'Kuni no Homare' (Domoto)- Light red, pale red center, h/h
 'Kumo no Ue' (syn 'Salmon Prince', Wilson #29)- Pink, single
 'Kumoi' (Domoto)- Red, pale red center, h/h
 'Kumo Giri' (-Kiri) (Beattie PI 77120)- Deep yellowish-pink with darker spots, single
 'Kunimitsu' (NA 45423)- Light purple, pale purple center, red flecks, h/h
 'Kurai no Hime' (syn 'Carmine Queen', Wilson #40)- Purplish pink, h/h
 'Kuren no Yuki' (syn 'Snowflake'- Wilson #2- 'Kurenosuki' (Domoto- is probably misspelled name)- White, h/h
 'Kyu Miyagino' (Beattie, PI 77114)- Reddish-purple, h/h
 'Maikujaku' (in Japan) ('Maikojaku', Stevenson)- White, Purple flecks, h/h
 'Maya Fujin' (NA 45443)- Purple, single
 'Mikaeri Zakura' (or Sakura) (in Japan) ('Mikaera Zakura', Stevenson)- Light reddish-purple, pale purple center, single
 'Miyagino' (Domoto- Beattie, PI 77144)- Pink, h/h
 'Miyako Shibori'- (Beattie, PI 77070)- White, red flecks, single
 'Mizu no Yamabuki' (Domoto)- Light yellowish white, deeper yellowish throat, h/h
 'Momiji Gasani' (Beattie, PI 77124)- Red, h/h
 'Momo Zono' (Beattie PI 77108)- Light pink, single
 'Murasame' (Beattie, PI 77090)- White, purple flecks, single
 'Nani Wagata' (syn 'Painted Lady', Domoto- Wilson #5)- Light pink, lighter center, single
 'Ogi no Odorikaraki' (in Japan) ('Ogi no Odorikaraki' syn 'Kojo no Odorikaraki', Stevenson)- Reddish purple, single
 'Ohigasane' (in Japan) (Syn 'Okikasane', aka 'Cherryblossom', Wilson #5)- Light red, h/h
 'Ohzora' (in Japan) (syn 'Ozora')- Red, pale red center, h/h
 'Ohouchiyama' (in Japan) ('Oouchiyama', Stevenson, NA45418)- Reddish-purple, h/h
 'Oimatsu' (Domoto) Deep red, single
 'Oino Mezame' (syn 'Melody', Wilson #26)- Pink, single
 'Omoine' (syn 'Dame Lavender', Wilson #25)- Light

purple with lighter purple center, single
 ‘Ominosera’ (‘Onno Sora’, Stevenson)- Light purple, narrow petals, white anthers, single
 ‘Oogochō’ (NA 45418)- Deep purplish-red, darker blotch, irregular semi-double or h/h
 ‘Osaraku’ (syn ‘Penelope’, Wilson #17)- Purplish pink, pale purple center, single.
 ‘Osaraku’ Seedling (syn ‘Winsome’, Wilson #49)- Light purple with lighter center, single
 ‘Otome’ (syn ‘Maiden’s Blush’, Wilson #18)- Pink with lighter center, single
 ‘Rangyoku’ (Beattie, PI 77109- Stevenson’s ‘Rankyoken’ is the same)- Strong red, single
 ‘Rashomon’ (syn ‘Meteor’, Wilson #37)- Deep red, single
 ‘Rikyugonomi’ (in Japan) (‘Rikugonomi’, NA 45450)- Reddish-purple, h/h
 ‘Sakura Tsukasa’ (syn ‘All-a-glow’, Domoto; Beattie, PI 77129; Wilson #44)- Light purple, single
 ‘Saotome’ (syn ‘Pink Pearl’, Domoto; Wilson #21)- Purplish pink, single
 ‘Seigai’ (in Japan) (syn ‘Seikai Ao Umi’, ‘Madonna’, Wilson #1)- Yellowish white, h/h (there is an *R. stenopetalum* f. *linearifolium* variety by the same name but the plant and the flowers are entirely different from this Kurume)
 ‘Shino Nome’ (Stevenson)- Pale reddish purple, single
 ‘Shinmiyagino’ (‘Shinimiagagion’, Stevenson)- Magenta, irregular single and h/h
 ‘Shin Seigai’ (in Japan) (syn ‘Shin Seikai’, Old Ivory, Wilson #3)- Yellowish white, h/h;
 ‘Shin Utena’ (syn ‘Santoi’, Wilson #28)- Yellowish pink, lighter center, single
 ‘Shintoki no Hagasane’ (syn ‘Rose Taffetas’, Wilson #20)- Pink, h/h
 ‘Shintsuuten’ (in Japan) (syn ‘Shintsune’, Stevenson) (Erroneous spelling)- Strong reddish-purple, single
 ‘Shirataki’ (Beattie PI 77103)- No description available
 ‘Shizu no Mai’ (NA 45426)- Light red, red flecks, h/h
 ‘Shuchuka’ (in Japan) (‘Shjuchuke’, Stevenson, misspelled)- Red, pale red center, semi-h/h
 ‘Suetsumuhana’ (in Japan) (‘Suetsumu’, in the US, syn ‘Flame’, Wilson #34)- Reddish pink, single
 ‘Sui Yohi’ (syn ‘Sprite’, Wilson #10)- White, flushed pink, darker pink border, single
 ‘Suga no Ito’ (syn ‘Kumo no Ito’ & ‘Betty’, Wilson #31)- Pink, single
 ‘Surusumi’ (in Japan) (‘Surisumi’, Beattie PI 77143)- Dark purple, single
 ‘Tago no Ura’ (NA 45429)- White, h/h
 ‘Takamakie’ (Stevenson)- White, purple flecks, single
 ‘Takasago’ (syn ‘Cherryblossom’, Domoto- Wilson #11)- Pink, h/h
 ‘Tama Beni’ (NA 45427)- Strong red, single
 ‘Tama no Utena’ (syn ‘Flamingo’, Wilson #45)- Yellowish pink with lighter center, single
 ‘Tama no Yukari’ (syn ‘Tama no Midori’, Beattie, PI

77093)- Pink, single
 ‘Tamafuyo’ (syn ‘Fancy’, Wilson #23)- Pink with lighter centers, single
 ‘Tanchō’ (syn ‘Seraphim’, Wilson #6)- Pink with lighter center, h/h
 ‘Tennyō no Mai’ (NA 45430)- Red, single
 ‘Terukuni’ (in Japan) (misspelled as ‘Terukimi, Domoto’)- Light red, red flecks, single
 ‘Tokoharu’ (syn ‘Joushun’) (NA 45433)- White, purple flecks, h/h
 ‘Tokonatsu’ (Stevenson; NA 45432)- White, purple flecks, single
 ‘Tsuki Minoen’ (NA45431)- Red, pale red center, single
 ‘Tsuta Momiji’ (syn ‘Cardinal’, Wilson #33, Domoto)- Pink, h/h
 ‘Ukamuse’ (syn ‘Princess Delight’, Wilson #47)- Vermillion, single
 ‘Usu Yukari’ (in Japan) (misspelled as ‘Usugukari’, Stevenson- NA 45413)- Light purple, pale purple center, single
 ‘Waka Kayede’ (syn ‘Red Robin’, Wilson #38)- Purplish red, single
 ‘Wakaba’ (‘Wakalia’, Stevenson) (‘Wakalia’ is not a Japanese name)- Pink, single
 ‘Wakaebisu’ (NA 45450)- Light red single, often variable
 ‘Yakumo’ (in Japan) (misspelled as ‘Yukumo’- there is no such Japanese word)- Strong red, h/h
 ‘Yatsu Hashi’ (Beattie PI 77119)- Dark pink, single
 ‘Yaye Hiryu’ (syn ‘Yaye Giri’, ‘Scarlet Prince’, Wilson #39)- Vermillion, h/h
 ‘Yomei Nishiki’ (NA 45446)- Purple, deep purple flecks, single
 ‘Yourou’ (in Japan) (syn ‘Yoro’, NA 45447)- White, single
 ‘Yorozuyo’ (syn ‘Purity’, Wilson #4)- White, greenish throat, tubular, single
 ‘Yoshi Migatake’ (Stevenson; NA 45445)- Light red, h/h
 ‘Yozakura’ (Stevenson)- Light purple, single

Postscript

The Kurume Hybrids are taken to be hybrids produced by Kirishima Azaleas in the Kurume area of Fukuoka, Kyushu, Japan. In that respect, the Kurumes are more territorial than the Satsuki Hybrids which can be hybridized anywhere in Japan. Our main goal was to see how many of the so-called “Kurume” cultivars listed in the US are true Kurume Hybrids following that context. In order to do so, we had to rely on documents and books from Japan. Unfortunately, many of them are in Kanji and took us a while with the help of Dr. Yoko Thakur to understand them. Such an endeavor is extremely time consuming and occasionally prone to error.

The Kurume Vegetables and Ornamental Research Station in Fukuoka maintains a complete list of the currently available Kurume Hybrid azaleas along with their photographs as JPEG files. Dr. Satoshi Yamaguchi was the keeper of

these documents until he retired a while ago. A few of the ASA members may have copies of his database.

Visitors to Japan interested in viewing large collections of Kurume Hybrids, the following places are recommended (Kurume no Tsutsuji, 1989):

1. Chu-ou Koen (Central Park)- unspecified large number of specimens.
2. Chikugo-gawa Kurume Tsutsuji-en (Chikugo River Kurume Azalea Garden)- Over 30,000 specimens of Kurume Hybrids. The park also maintains a large number of Satsuki and *Enkianthus campanulatus*, among others.
3. Kurume-shinrin Tsutsuji Kouen (Kurume Azalea Forest Park)- Over 60,000 Kurume specimens, many Satsuki, and Inter-group Hybrids.
4. Tsutsujigaoka Park (Tatebayashi City, Gunma Prefecture)- Famous for its collection of a large number of larger than 400-year-old *R. kaempferi* specimens, as of 1989, it contains over 5,000 Kurume specimens (50 cultivars) as a gift from the Executive Committee of International Azalea Festival, 1989.

In Part 2 of this article in a future issue, we will discuss the many other cultivars that are often either listed or sold in the business. Some of them may actually be true Kurume Hybrids but cannot be verified using Japanese literature.

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Notes and References

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