

The Kurume Azaleas - Part 2

By *Ajit K. Thakur, Ph.D.—Springfield, Virginia*
and *Carolyn Beck—Oak Hill, Virginia*

Introduction

In Part 1 of this article (*The Azalean*, Fall 2022, Thakur and Beck), we discussed the origin, distribution, and a list of the Kurume Hybrids that are recognized as such in Japanese literature. There are other cultivars that are listed as Kurume Azaleas in the West but cannot be verified to be so. It is possible that some or more of them are old Kurume Hybrids that may not be found in garden centers and literature even in Japan. The added difficulty in the West is that the importers assigned English names in many cases and it is not feasible to find the original Japanese names because of lost documents.

In the following discussion, we will try to identify and address some of these issues. Many of these plants may have been imported from the Kurume area, but as we discussed in Part 1, are not necessarily true Kurume Hybrids. Yet some others, though may have been grown in the Kurume area nurseries, are of different origins than the true Kurume Hybrids as we discussed in Part 1. Furthermore, there have been many plants developed in the West using one or more Kurume as parents. As we mentioned in Part 1, they are not recognized in Japan as Kurume Hybrids, and rightfully so.

Names of other Hybridizers or Introducers

Note: An asterisk (“*”) after a name implies the individual is deceased or the nursery is no longer in existence.

Akehurst Nursery- Perry Hill, Maryland; Allen*, Walter- Summerville, South Carolina; Aichele, C.F.- Mount Holly, South Carolina; Ames*, J.S.- North Easton, Massachusetts; Bobbink & Atkins Nursery* – East Rutherford, New Jersey; Boskoop Nursery- Boskoop, Holland; Brown, C.E.- United Kingdom; Blauw, J.- Boskoop, Holland; Cagle, James- Seagrove, North Carolina; de Wilde, Ronald- Bridgeton, New Jersey; Dodd, Tom, Jr.- Semmes, Alabama; Felix & Dijkhuis Nursery, Boskoop, Holland; Hachman, Hans- Germany; Hage, W.C. & Co.- Boskoop, Holland; Hager*, Don- Spotsylvania, Virginia; Hage, W.C.- Boskoop, Holland; Hahn, Louis- Pittsburg, Pennsylvania; Haworth-Booth, Michael- Surrey, England;

Hershey, Ralph, & Everett- Gap, Pennsylvania; Hohman*, Henry- Kingsville, Maryland; James, Ray- Hawthorn, Oregon; Knap Hill Nursery- England; King, Edward- Alexandria, Virginia; Kinsey Garden- Knoxville, Tennessee; Koppeschaar, W.F. – Boskoop, Holland; Langdon, C.- Australia; Lelliot, T. (Voster Nursery)- Victoria, Australia; Martin, Joe- Lake Country, Ohio; Nagel, W.- Germany; Oliver, J.- Fairfield, Connecticut; Partain, Lloyd- Pottstown, Pennsylvania; Roehrs & Co.- Rutherford, New Jersey; Sawada*, K.- Mobile, Alabama; Schepens, Mr. * & Mrs.- Clinton, Ohio; Schumacher, U.- Germany; Stewart, D.- Dorset, England; Talley, Robert*- Wachapreague, Virginia; Taylor*, Glenn- Springfield, Virginia; Thomson, James G.- Mobile, Alabama; van Nes, G.B. & Sons- Boskoop, Holland; Vermeulen, J.- Bridgetown, New Jersey; Waterer*, A., Sr.- England; Williams, F.J.- England; Yavorsky, Leon- Fairfield, New Jersey.

Not Found in Current Japanese Documents

Some or many of these plants may originally have been Kurume or other Japanese hybrids. Unfortunately, their names have been distorted, misspelled, or totally lost with the passage of time. Because of that, they should not be listed as Kurume Hybrids.

‘Geisha’ (in Japan) (Stevenson introduced it as ‘Gaeshi’, (a Mucronatum Hybrid- the word ‘Gaeshi’ is not a Japanese word); Coral, h/h (there are other plants by the same name in different hybrid groups in Japan and a Glenn Dale Hybrid in the U.S.))

‘Hatsuoti’ (Stevenson)- Light purple, single, large flowers (larger than 2" in diameter), probably a Mucronatum Hybrid resembling ‘Lilacina’

‘Iro Asobi’ (in Japan) (Introduced as ‘Iro Sobi’, Beattie PI 77097)- Light purple, single, large flower (Probably a Mucronatum Hybrid)

‘Juhachiko’ (syn ‘Yukachiko’, Stevenson)- Salmon pink, single

‘Keinohana’ (syn ‘Ishiyama’, Stevenson)- Dark lilac pink, single (‘Katsura-no-Hana’¹⁾)

‘Kinjo Tama’ (Stevenson)- Yellowish-pink, h/h (‘Kinjiono Heki’¹⁾)

‘Kiono Kami’ (Domoto)- Pink, single

‘Kojo no Odorikaraka’ (Stevenson)- Vivid red, single (‘Ogino Odorikarako’¹⁾)



Fig. 1 'Pink Ribbons'- a 'De'ja' Bloom® hybrid (late fall).
Photo by Dr. Ajit Thakur.



Fig. 2 'Hana Kasuri'- an intergroup hybrid.
Photo by Dr. Akihide Okamoto.



Fig. 3 'Yumi Kasuri'- an intergroup hybrid.
Photo by Dr. Akihide Okamoto.

- 'Koran Yuki' (Stevenson)- Reddish-orange, single
- 'Kumagaya' (Stevenson)- Strong pink, single
- 'Maimsode' (Stevenson)⁸- Purplish-pink, single ('Mai no Sode'^{1,2})
- 'Metake' (Stevenson)- Vivid red, dwarf, single, late for a Kurume
- 'Morning Glow' (Domoto)- Bright rose-pink with dark blotches and stripes, h/h (Japanese name got lost- there is a Pericat Hybrid by the same name which is a forcing azalea)
- 'Mountain Laurel' (Domoto) (Japanese name got lost)
- 'Paikune' (Stevenson)- Bright yellowish-pink, star shaped
- 'Sahohime' (Stevenson)- Partially petaloid sepals rose-lilac with darker blotch, single
- 'Saroi' (Stevenson)- White, flushed and edged white, single
- 'Senju' (Stevenson)- Pale purplish-pink, darker flush, single
- 'Senka' (Stevenson)- Deep flame pink with darker spotting, single
- 'Shi no Uye' (Stevenson) (there is no such Japanese plant- there is a plant called 'Shin no Noe' with the same description)- Greenish-yellow with pink edges, single
- 'Shikishima' (Stevenson)- Lilac pink, single
- 'Shinoito' (Stevenson)- Yellowish-white, light purple flush, single
- 'Shinsagino Kagasane' (Stevenson)- Rosy-red with paler throat, crimson blotch, single ('Shin Tokino Hagasane'¹)
- 'Shojyo' (Domoto)- Vivid red, single
- 'Toun' (Stevenson) (There is no such Japanese word)- White, faint pink blush, reddish-purple spots, single ('Shinonome'¹)
- 'Yaeshojo' (Beattie, PI 77100)- Scarlet red, h/h
- 'Yezo Nishiki' (Stevenson)- Creamy white, single ('Ezoni-shiki'¹)
- 'Yukachiko' (Stevenson)- Yellowish-pink, white center, single ('Juhachiko'¹)

Hybridized, Raised, Renamed, or Selected in the West

Many of these cultivars were hybridized in the West using one (in some cases more) Kurume Hybrids or raised as seedlings or sports of other plants, some of which may have been Kurume. However, they should not be listed as "Kurume Hybrids" just like most of the Robin Hill, many of the Glenn Dale, almost all of the Back Acres, Harris, Pennington, Stewart, Holly Spring and other recent hybrids that used one or more Satsuki Azaleas in the hybridization in the West should not be called "Satsuki Hybrids", and they are not. They should all be called "Intergroup Hybrids". Many others were given Western names and no records of their original Japanese names exist for correlation purpose. This is particularly true for the Domoto Brothers introductions.

- ‘Admiration’ (Domoto)- Pink, single
- ‘Addy Wery’ (syn ‘Mrs. Wery’, den Ouden)- Strong red, orange blotch, single
- ‘Adonis’ (Felix and Dijkhuis)- White, frilled, h/h
- ‘Becky’ (Voster Nursery) (sport of ‘Hinodegiri’)- Deep pink, purplish-pink blotch, single
- ‘Besse A. Dodd’ (Dodd)- Light pink, lighter center, h/h
- ‘Betsy’ (Unknown hybridizer)- White, fringed pink, single
- ‘Bikini’ (Haworth-Booth) (‘Hinomayo’ seedling)- Moderate purplish-red, lighter center, single
- ‘Blaauw’s Pink’ (Blaauw)- Strong yellowish-pink, darker blotch, h/h
- ‘Bouquet Rose’ (Domoto) (introduced from Japan but no Japanese name available)- Rosy-pink, deeper center, red stamens, single
- ‘Bridesmaid’ (Domoto) (introduced from Japan but no Japanese name available)- Salmon-pink, darker stamens, single
- ‘Brilliant’ (Domoto) (introduced from Japan but no Japanese name available)- Salmon-rose, darker edging, single
- ‘Canyalo’ (Kopperschaar)- Dark pink, single
- ‘Cardinal’ (Schepens); (‘Mother’s Day’ sport)- Vivid reddish-orange, single
- ‘Catherine Stewart’ (Allan)- Moderately purple, h/h
- ‘Cherry Pink’ (Knap Hill Nursery)- Vivid pink, single
- ‘Clemson’ (Aichele)- Pink, h/h (Not a Kurume Hybrid, a Southern Indica form; a chance seedling of Rutherford’s ‘Caroline Graham’)
- ‘Chloris’ (Felix and Dijkhuis)- Pink, single
- ‘Colyer’ (Brown, Stewart introduction)- Deep purple with red spots in the throat, single, large flowers resembling some *Formosum* Hybrids
- ‘Crepuscule’ (Hage)- Light purple, single
- ‘Daphne’ (Domoto)- White, light lavender border (single) (Original Japanese name is lost)
- ‘Dark Mahogany’ (Hohman)- Deep mahogany red, h/h
- ‘Decision’ (Hage)- Bright reddish-orange single
- ‘Dee Dee’ (Wildwood Garden)- Pink, single, compact
- ‘Delicatissima’ (Domoto)- White shaded lilac pink, brown blotch, single (Original Japanese name is not available)
- ‘Diana’ (Felix and Dijkhuis)- Yellowish-pink, h/h
- ‘Diane Robin’ (Langdon)- Purplish-red, single
- ‘Double Hinodegiri’ (syn ‘Hinodegiri Double’) (Source not known)- Reddish-purple, h/h
- ‘Ecstasy’ (Domoto)- Deep pink, single
- ‘Edna B’ (Yavorsky)- Pink, single (Flowers too large to be a Kurume (Gable’s ‘Elizabeth Gable’ × Unknown)
- ‘El Frida’ (Sawada)- Light purple, white throat, h/h (Presumably a *Rhododendron austrinum* (Small) Rehder × *Mucronatum* ‘Indica Alba’ cross). It is possibly a case of apomixis (Lee, 1958).
- ‘Eleanor Allan’ (Allan)- Pink, single
- ‘Eric the Red’ (Aichele)- Vivid red, h/h (Flowers too large to be a Kurume; probably a *Mucronatum*)
- ‘Esmeralda’ (Koppeschaar)- White flushed with purplish-pink, single
- ‘Etna’ (Hage)- Moderate red, single
- ‘Exquisite’ (Domoto)- Salmon pink, single
- ‘Firebird’ (syn ‘Yae Giri’, Domoto)- Reddish-orange, h/h
- ‘Firestar’ (Mrs. Schepens)- Reddish-orange, single
- ‘Gabriele’ (Hachmann)- Deep reddish-purple, single
- ‘Gina Hohman’ (Hohman)- Light reddish-orange, h/h
- ‘Gloria Mundi’ (van Hecke) (syn ‘Orange Coral Bells’)- Red, h/h occasionally semi-double
- ‘Glory’ (Unknown hybridizer. There are several other plants by the same name; e.g., a Pericat Hybrid, a Bob-bink & Atkins Hybrid, etc.)- Strong yellowish-pink, darker blotch, h/h (Most likely the same as ‘Blaauw’s Pink’)
- ‘Greenway’ (Williams)- Pink, single
- ‘Heather’ (Unknown hybridizer)- Strong purplish-red, h/h
- ‘Helene’ (Felix and Dijkhuis)- Pink, semi-double, probably not a Kurume Hybrid
- ‘Hexe’ (syn ‘Firefly’³) (Forster; Belgian Indica Hybrid) - Strong purplish-red, h/h (there are several other plants by this name: one of them is a Blaauw’s Hybrid which is deep red, semi-double, frilled)
- ‘Hexe Supreme’ (Selection of ‘Hexe’)- dark red, double
- ‘Hahn’s Red’ (Hahn)- Vivid red, single (most likely ‘Mother’s Day’ renamed)
- ‘Hino Crimson’ (Vermeulen)- Crimson red, single
- ‘Hino Supreme’ (Sawada) (Seedling of ‘Hinodegiri’)- Red, single
- ‘Illustre’ (Hage)- Reddish-orange, single
- ‘Jennifer’ (Unknown Origin)- Dark purplish-pink, single
- ‘Jimmy Allan’ (Allan)- Reddish-orange, single
- ‘Jubile’ (van Hecke)- Light purplish-pink, h/h
- ‘Julie Ann’ (Langdon)- Strong reddish-purple, single
- ‘King’s Luminous Pink’ (King, Partain introduction)- Pink with darker margin, white throat, single
- ‘La Perle’ (Unknown hybridizer)- Yellowish-pink, h/h
- ‘Laura’ (Aichele)- Vivid reddish-purple, dark spots, h/h
- ‘Lavender Queen’ (Domoto)- Light lavender-white, single (original Japanese name not available)
- ‘Linda Stuart’ (Yavorsky)- Deep yellowish-pink, paler center, h/h (probably a *Mucronatum* Hybrid)
- ‘Little Beauty’ (van Nes)- Purplish-red, h/h
- ‘Lysander’ (Schumacher)- Vivid-red, single, mid-to-late season blooming (probably a *Mucronatum* Hybrid)
- ‘Marj T’ (Taylor)- Deep pink, tubular, single
- ‘Martin’s White’ (Martin)- White, h/h
- ‘Mary Frances Hohman’ (Hohman)- Reddish-orange, partially petaloid, mid-season, h/h
- ‘Mary Lynn’ (Aichele)- Vivid purplish-pink, h/h
- ‘Maryland Purple’ (Tingle)- Purple, single



Fig. 4 'Cattleya' (*R. x Transiens*).
Photo by Dr. Ajit Thakur



Fig. 5 'Houohden' (Syn 'Ho Oden') (Onyamatsu Azalea Group member).
Photo by Dr. Ajit Thakur.



Fig. 6 'Linda Stuart' (Yavorsky).
Photo by Carolyn Beck.

- 'Massasoit' (Allan)- Dark red, single
- 'Matador' (Hage)- Deep reddish-orange, single
- 'Mauve Beauty' (Domoto)- Mauve, single
- 'May Glory' (deWilde)- Red, single
- 'Merle Finimore' ('Hinodegiri' × 'Tancho', March)- Deep red, single
- 'Midinette' (Hage)- Yellowish-pink, single
- 'Miss Prim' (Yavorsky)- Deep pink, semi-double, mid-season
- 'Nancy Plent' (Yavorsky)- Deep pink, single, mid-season, flowers too large, 3.5" in diameter to be a Kurume Hybrid- possibly a Mucronatum Hybrid
- 'Nicole Joy' (Langdon)- Moderate purplish pink, red spots, single
- 'Orange Cup' (No detail available)- Strong orange, h/h
- 'Orion' (Felix and Dijkhuis)- Dark pink, single
- 'Peach Blow' (Unknown Origin)- Flushed strong pink, darker blotch, single or irregular semi-double
- 'Peggy Ann Rodino' (aka 'Roehr's Peggy Ann') (Bauman, intro. Roehr)- White with purplish-pink border, h/h
- 'Perfection' (Hage)- Reddish-orange, single
- 'Peter' (Stewart)- Yellowish-pink, deeper blotch, single
- 'Phyllis Elliot' (Elliot)- Light pink, single
- 'Pink Progress' (De Wilde)- pink, single (a seedling of Sander's cross of 'Hinomayo' × 'Hinodegiri')
- 'Pixie Petticoat' (Unknown Origin)- Purple, frilled, h/h
- 'Posaeman' (Rutherford- intro. Aichele)- Light, yellowish-purple, h/h (Flowers larger than 3" in diameter; probably a Mucronatum Hybrid)
- 'Psyche' (Felix and Dijkhuis)- Pink, single
- 'Pink Jewel' (Allan)- Pink, single
- 'Pink Lady' (Hage)- Vivid pink, darker throat, single
- 'Red Seal' (Hage)- Vivid red, single
- 'Red Progress' (de Wilde)- Deep rose-pink, deeper throat, single
- 'Rex' (van Hecke)- Light reddish-orange, single
- 'Rose' (Domoto; the original Japanese name not available)- Vivid red, single
- 'Rubinetta' (Hachmann)- Vivid reddish-purple, light reddish markings, single
- 'Ruhrfeuer' (Schumacher)- Strong red, dark brown markings, single, dwarf (Probably a Kiusianum Hybrid or a selection of *R. kiusianum*)
- 'Ruth May' (Oliver)- Moderately pink, white stripes, lighter margins, single
- 'Sakata Blush' (Koppeschaar)- Light pink, single
- 'Sakata Red' (Koppeschaar)- Vivid red, single
- 'Sakata Rose' (Koppeschaar, misspelled with a "t" at the end)- Deep pink, single
- 'Salmon Beauty' (Domoto; the original Japanese name not available)- Salmon-pink, h/h
- 'Salmon Bells' (Talley; sport of 'Kirin' aka 'Coral Bells')- Yellowish-pink, h/h

‘Salmon Princess’ (Hage)- Yellowish-pink, single
 ‘Salmon Sander’ (Unknown Origin)- Deep yellowish-pink, single
 ‘Salmon Special’ (Unknown Origin)- Yellowish-pink, ruffled, h/h
 ‘Salmon Spray’ (Hage)- Light yellowish-pink, single
 ‘Sharon Kathleen’ (James)- Light purplish-pink, dark red spots, single
 ‘Sherwood Cerise’ (Sherwood Nursery)- Vivid reddish-purple, single
 ‘Sherwood Red’ (Sherwood Nursery)- Vivid red, single
 ‘Sherwoodii’ (syn ‘Sherwood Orchid’, Sherwood Nursery)- Vivid reddish-purple, darker blotch, h/h
 ‘Silverster’ (Boskoop)- Vivid purplish-red, light margins, single
 ‘Snowball’ (Cagle) (sport of ‘Snow’)- White, h/h semi-double, compact, dead flowers drop
 ‘Sorai’ (Hybridizer not known)- White, flushed and bordered purplish-pink, single, flowers larger than Kurume Hybrids (3” or so) (possibly a Mucronatum Hybrid)
 ‘Sorrento’ (Lelliot)- Purplish-pink, yellow flushed throat, h/h
 ‘Sweet Briar’ (Unknown Origin)- Strong purplish-red, single
 ‘Tilly’ (Yavorsky) (sport of ‘Hino Crimson’)- Reddish-orange, single
 ‘Tracy T’ (Thompson)- Pale pink, single
 ‘Tradition’ (syn ‘Roehr’s Tradition’, Roehr) (There are several other plants of different lineage by this name); White single
 ‘Tropic Sun’ (Akehurst Nursery) (Sport of ‘Hino Crimson’); Reddish-orange, single
 ‘Twilight’ (Sawada) (seedling of ‘Peach Blow’); White, flushed pink, single
 ‘Velvet Gown’ (Waterer)- Vivid reddish-purple, red speckling, single
 ‘Vesuvius’ (Domoto)- Deep salmon red, single
 ‘Victoire’ (Hage)- Dark orange, single
 ‘Victorine Hetling’ (van Nes) (seedling of ‘Hinomayo’)- Vivid reddish-purple, single
 ‘Ward’s Ruby’ (Domoto)- Strong red, single
 ‘Wendy’ (Unknown Origin. There is a Robin Hill Hybrid of the same name)- White, single
 ‘Wintertime’ (syn ‘Midwinter’, Boskoop)- Vivid red, single

Introduced from the Kurume Area or Hybridized in the West, but not Kurume Hybrids

‘Alladin’ × ‘Amoena’ (Boskoop)- Reddish-purple, single
 ‘Alladin’ (Hage)- Vivid red, single
 ‘Amy’ (Yavorsky)- Pink, double
 ‘Anne Frank’ (Nagel)- Pink, faint reddish markings, single
 ‘Anthony Roland’ (Langdon) (Unspecified Kurume seed-



Fig. 9 ‘Peggy Ann Rhodino’ (Bauman/Roehr). Photo by Dr. Ajit Thakur.



Fig. 8 ‘Snow’ (Unknown Origin). Photo by Dr. Ajit Thakur.



Fig. 9 ‘Addy Wery’ (Ouden). Photo by Dr. Ajit Thakur.

ling)- Strong reddish-purple, red spots, h/h
 ‘Avalanche’ (Domoto)- White, h/h
 ‘Cattleya’ (Domoto) (Possibly an *R. × Transiens* form)-
 Light lilac pink, tinted white, single
 ‘Debutante’ (Domoto)- Salmon-pink, lighter center with red
 blotch, single
 ‘Fairy’ (Domoto)- Flushed pink, dark pink border, single
 ‘Gibiyama’ (Beattie, PI 77091) (A *Mucronatum* Hybrid)-
 Pale purple, single
 ‘Hatsu Giri’ (An *Amoenum* Hybrid)- Magenta, single
 ‘Hatsushima’ (in Japan) (‘Hatsushimo’, Beattie, PI 77138)
 (*Mucronatum* Hybrid)- Purplish-pink flushed, darker
 blotch, single
 ‘Houohden’ (in Japan) (syn ‘Ho Oden’, Beattie, PI 77112)
 (In Japanese literature an *Onyamatsu Tsutsuji* Group Mem-
 ber being a cross of *Mucronatum* ‘Sekidera’ × *R. indicum*)-
 White flushed purplish-pink, h/h
 ‘Hortensia’ (Domoto) (Not described as a Kurume Hybrid
 in Japanese literature)- Soft pink, single
 ‘Iro Asobi’ (in Japan) (aka ‘Iro Sobi’, Beattie PI 77097)
 (Possibly a *Mucronatum* Hybrid)- Soft purple, single, large
 flowers (3" in diameter) like in *Mucronatum* Hybrids
 ‘Irresistible’ (syn ‘My-O’, Pryor, USDA)- Strong purplish-
 pink, h/h, white variegated leaves- there is also a Lewis
 Hybrid by the same name but with semi-double h/h, no
 variegation on the leaves
 ‘Kermesina’ (Boskoop, an *R. kiusianum* Makino selection)-
 Strong purplish-red, single
 ‘Kirishima’ (No detail available- possibly an *R. kiusianum*
 Makino or its natural selection)- White with reddish throat,
 single
 ‘Kocho no Mai’ (syn ‘Butterfly Dance’, Beattie PI 77136)-
 Deep purplish-pink, lighter throat, single; according to
 Wilson, h/h, resembling *Amoenum* Hybrids
 ‘Kodai Nishiki’ (Stevenson)- White, h/h
 ‘Mikawa Murasaki’ (Beattie, PI 77072, PI 77083) (It is ac-
 tually a *Mucronatum* Hybrid)- Vivid reddish-purple, single
 ‘Torch Azalea’ (aka ‘Torch’) (A selection of *R. kaempferi*
 Planch)- Funnel shaped, reddish-pink, single
 ‘Sun Star’ (Domoto)- Deep purplish-red, darker blotch,
 single

Unknown Origin

‘Apricot’ (Domoto) (Japanese name not available)- Apricot
 with white throat, h/h
 ‘Cheerfulness’ (Domoto)- Strong purplish-red, darker cen-
 ter, h/h
 ‘Cherry Ripe’ (Domoto)- Vivid red, tubular, h/h
 ‘Kinsey White’ (Kinsey Garden)- White, single
 ‘Miss Buist’ (Bull, 1985) (Possibly a Southern Indica)-
 White, single
 ‘Snow’ (Domoto)- White, h/h (spent flowers stick)
 ‘Snow #125’ (a selection of Snow)- White, h/h

Postscript

Dr. Satoshi Yamaguchi (1989) speculated about further breeding of Kurume Azaleas by crossing with white forms of *R. tashiroi* Maxim (*Sakura tsutsuji*), *R. tamurae* (Makino) Masamune (*Maruba Satsuki*), *R. indicum* (L.) Sweet (*Satsuki*), *R. tosaense* Makino (*Fuji tsutsuji*) and several other species evergreen and the deciduous azalea *R. molle* (Blume) G. Don ssp. *japonicum* A. Gray f. *flavum* (*Kirenge tsutsuji*). The purpose for the deciduous species was to produce yellow evergreen hybrids. The purpose of the others would be to produce very early and autumn flowering hybrids with the typical shiny Kurume leaves and compact plant habit. There has been some success in crossing Kurume Hybrids with the deciduous *japonicum* to develop yellow evergreen azaleas (Okamoto et. al., 2006).

Many of the plants from these hybridization projects in Kurume are still being evaluated and have yet to be released in Japan and not any has arrived so far in the West. Dr. Okamoto’s group at the Kurume-shi Sekai Tsutsuji Sentaa (Kurume City World Azalea Center) have also crossed the Kurume Hybrid ‘Gofuku’ with *R. keiskei* Miq. (*Hikage tsutsuji*), the lepidote rhododendron with yellow flowers (Okamoto and Ureshino, 2010).

They are being evaluated currently and some day we may see some of them in America. In the US, there is an abundance of new autumn or multi-season blooming azaleas in the groups Encore[®], Bloom’N Again[®], Bloom-A-Thon[®], and Déjà Bloom[®]. Most of them contain an open pollinated seedling of *R. oldhamii* Maxim called ‘Fourth of July’, which itself blooms both in the spring and autumn in Zone 7.

One of the Déjà Bloom[®] Hybrids, ‘Pink Ribbons’ hybridized by Dr. Cecil Pounders by crossing *R. stenopetalum* f. *linearifolium* ‘Hanaguruma’ (erroneously designated as ‘Koromo Shikibu’ in the West) × *R. oldhamii* ‘Fourth of July’ is deeper pink than the seed parent and sweetly fragrant. See Figure 1. In Zone 7, it blooms during spring, late summer-early autumn, and winter. For hybridizers, this ‘Fourth of July’ crossed with some Kurume Hybrids may produce multi-season blooming inter-group hybrids with Kurume-type leaf and plant habits. There are various *kaempferi* selections that are multi-season bloomers (viz. PI 85871 seedling ‘Dorsett’ by Eugene Hollowell and ‘Indian Summer’ by Joseph Gable, and many

others) that should provide parentage of multi-season blooming inter-group azaleas. Hybridizers may experiment with them by crossing with some Kurume, Satsuki, and Hirado Hybrids to extend the azalea blooming season.

There are currently two official locations where Kurume Azalea research and production are maintained- the Kurume Branch, National Agricultural Research Institute of Vegetables, Ornamental Plants and Tea, and the Kurume-shi Sekai Tsutsuji Sentaa (Kurume World Center of Azaleas), both in Kurume City. The latter has hybridized and released several brilliant crosses between Kurume and Kurume-Satsuki Hybrids. Figures 2 ('Hana Kasuri') and 3 ('Yume Kasuri') show two of them courtesy of Dr. Akihide Okamoto of the Center. Incidentally, the Japanese words 'Kasuri' (aka 'Gasuri') means dye patterned kimono fabric, 'Hana' means flower, and 'Yume' means plum.

Figures 4–9 depict some azaleas that are sometimes sold in the West as Kurume azaleas. Most of these, as described in this article, are not.

Finally, we have not discussed the intergroup azaleas with Kurume Hybrids in Australia. There are two dozen or more of them (Galle, 1987). They were never introduced in the US and very little is known about them.

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2. Yamaguchi, S. 1989, "Further Breeding of Kurume Azalea", in *Kurume no Tsutsuji (Azaleas in Kurume)*, pp 31-32.
3. Okamoto, A. and Suto, K., 2006, "Crossability of Kurume azaleas as a seed parent for hybridizing with *Rhododendron japonicum* (A. Gray) J.V. Suringer f. *flavum* Nakai, J. Jap. Soc. Hort. Sci., 70:235-237. (Obtained 12 healthy hybrid seedlings and five of them bloomed five years after pollination. They are evaluating these hybrids and some day we may see some of them in our gardens.)

4. Okamoto, A. and Ureshino, K., 2010, "Interspecific Hybridization between Kurume Azalea and Scaly Rhododendrons *Rhododendron keiskei* Miq., *R. mucronulatum* Turcz, var. *ciliatum* Nakai", Hort. Research (Japan), 9(4):395-401.

(The main text is in Japanese; the title, and abstract have English translation).

5. Galle, F.C.,1987, *Azaleas*, Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, Revised Ed.
6. Kurume-shi Sekai Tsutsuji Sentaa (Kurume City World Azalea Center) Undated, Origin of Kurume Azalea.1
7. Kurume-shi Sekai Tsutsuji Sentaa (Kurume City World Azalea Center) Undated, People in Connection with Kurume Azalea.2
8. Leslie, A.C., Compiler, 2004, *The International Rhododendron Register and Checklist*, 2nd Edition.

Notes

1. 'Maimsode' is not a Japanese word. There is a Japanese word "Maisode" (Mai = dance or dancing and sode = kimono sleeve). The current authors are unaware of any Kurume or a related cultivar by the name 'Maisode'. It could be an old cultivar that has disappeared from circulation.
2. Personal communication from Dr. Akihide Okamoto using old Japanese catalogs and documents
3. Both the American Rhododendron Society's "Azalea Plant Search" and The Royal Horticultural Society's Registry (2004) mention that 'Hexe' is registered as RHS 58 and hybridized or selected by Forster of Austria. Neither provides a first name associated with the last name Forster (it is Otto) and there was no year of registration (Forster introduced Hexe in 1885). It is a hybrid consisting of a seedling of the Belgian Indica 'Herzog Adolph von Nassau' (aka 'Duc du Nassau') × *Rhododendron* × *Amoenum*.

About the Authors

Dr. Ajit K. Thakur is a retired statistician whose love for azaleas (species evergreen and hybrids as well as the Kurume and Satsuki Hybrids) spans about 46 years. He has given seminars on azaleas on many occasions and written about them in *The Azalean* and is a long-time member of the Society. He has traveled throughout Japan and has been fortunate enough to have observed many exciting and unusual varieties of both hybrid and deciduous azaleas.

Carolyn Beck is a retired Registered Nurse and an active member of the Azalea Society of America. She and her husband, Paul, have a diverse garden with an emphasis on azaleas. She propagates both evergreen and deciduous azaleas from cuttings and seeds for the Society. She is a frequent contributor to *The Azalean*.

All correspondence should be addressed to the first author at aythakur1@gmail.com.