



Dear Rose Friends,

We are excited to inform you that the 20th WFRS World Rose Convention is now just one year and two months away. Our preparations for the convention are advancing steadily. In light of this progress, we are pleased to announce that we will begin accepting registrations in July 2024. As the magnificent convention in Sweden draws to a close, we invite you to turn your attention to East Asia.

We have an exciting lineup of lectures planned for the 2025 WRC, covering a wide range of themes from "Roses in Asia," "Conservation," and "Disease Resistance" to "New Techniques."

In this issue, we would like to give you a preview of some of the lectures that will feature in the "Roses in Asia" section.



Our first highlight is a lecture by Dr. Yoshihiro Ueda, the Project Manager for WRC in FUKUYAMA. To commemorate the start of WRC in Japan, Dr. Ueda will present a lecture on the first day titled "Roses raised by Japanese Breeders."

In Japan, rose breeding was not practiced until around the mid-19th century. It was in the late 19th century, with the hobbyist cross-breeding of rose species introduced from outside Japan, that the improvement of Japanese rose varieties began to flourish. Transitioning into the mid-20th century, this effort was spearheaded by Seizo Suzuki of Keisei Rose Nurseries, who aimed to elevate Japanese rose breeding to a global level. Since then, young rose breeders, both professional and amateur, have been actively pushing forward with their breeding efforts. Among them, Takunori Kimura has determined breeding directions based on recent rose cultivation trends, actively introducing world-class varieties with a focus on

disease resistance. Kimura Takunori will be speaking on the final day at the Breeders' Panel.

Next, we are excited to introduce Dr. Yuki Mikanagi, a distinguished researcher and author celebrated for her work, "The Handbook of Wild Roses in Japan," which earned the World Federation of Rose Societies Literary Award in 2022. Dr. Mikanagi is set to speak at both the Sweden and Fukuyama conventions, offering her invaluable insights into the world of roses.

Her captivating lectures, titled "Stories of Roses which Started with a Wild Rose in Japan: *Rosa multiflora* Thunb.," will be a focal point of both events. In Sweden, she will shed light on the Polyantha Roses, transitioning to the Rambler Roses for the Fukuyama audience. Through her comprehensive presentations, attendees will explore the profound influence that the 16 wild roses native to Japan have exerted on the development of modern roses.



Rosa Multiflora

In addition to Dr. Mikanagi's compelling lectures, attendees at the Fukuyama convention will have the unique opportunity to observe a special display of Japan's wild roses at Fukuyama City Midorimachi Park, one of the event's venues.



The last speaker we're introducing is Dr. Nobuo Shirasuna, a renowned garden designer celebrated for his work on gardens that have received the WFRS Award of Garden Excellence. His innovative designs have significantly enhanced the allure of rose plantings in parks and along roads within Fukuyama City, making substantial contributions to the city's landscape.

Dr. Shirasuna's lecture, titled "Roses Depicted in Japanese Art," delves into an often-overlooked aspect of the rose's presence in Japan. Despite common perceptions, roses have been cultivated in Japan for centuries, not only as horticultural varieties but also as significant elements in Japanese literature and art.



It is a fascinating fact that prominent Japanese artists have frequently chosen roses as subjects for their works, embedding these flowers deeply into the fabric of Japanese culture and tradition. Roses have seamlessly integrated into the everyday life, becoming a cherished part of Japan's cultural heritage.

Dr. Shirasuna has taken a particular interest in what he calls "Mystery Roses." These are roses that are thought to have been cultivated in Japan since ancient times and still exist across the country. His research into these Mystery Roses aims to uncover the historical significance and continuity of rose cultivation in Japan, shedding light on the deep-rooted connection between roses and Japanese cultural expressions.

These lectures will enrich our understanding of the rose's enduring legacy and its multifaceted role in Japanese art and society.

Roses and Small Swallows
Abe Masazumi (1775-1826)

The foregoing stories are just some of the fascinating talks that await you at WRC Fukuyama 2025. Of course, we will also offer tours in which you can savor the beauty and fragrance of Japanese roses to your heart's content. I invite you to visit our website (<https://en.wrc2025fukuyama.jp/newsletter/>) and join our mailing list to receive all the latest updates.

We are looking forward to seeing you at the 20th WFRS World Rose Convention.

Sincerely,

Yukiko Shimura

Yukiko Shimura
President, Japan Rose Society

Naoki Edahiro

Naoki Edahiro
Chair, World Rose Convention Fukuyama Organizing Committee