



awa life

June 2018

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Interview:
Green Fingers at
**Awa Open
Gardens**

Biking the
Shimanami Kaido

**Awa Shoku: Eat
Japan Blue!**

Awa Life is a Monthly Publication of the Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association

In early June, most parts of Japan get visited by the rainy season, known as tsuyu, literally meaning "plum rain". There are a lot of nature related events in this months Awa Life. Don't let the grey clouds and rain get in your way of taking part of these events; all you need is your rain coat and umbrella and you are good to go! For those who prefer to go out on sunny days, hang in there, the sun shiny days of summer are coming soon!

For all of those who like writing, please feel free to submit an article to us at any point in time about basically anything. There are a few limitations though, such as you can't write about religion, politics, commercial activities or businesses or anything that we deem inappropriate. But, other than that, we would be more than happy to receive articles about anything and everything including but not limited to, concerts, lectures, other events, culture, sports, community group information or anything cool that's happening in your local community.

We highly appreciate all of your articles and we love reading them. So if that writing bug of yours is buzzing about, grab a pen or a computer and write and send away! Please send all submissions to our email:

awalife@gmail.com

Your editors,
Daralyn, Franzi, and Tom

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Download a PDF file of awa life or view the online version by going to TOPIA's website!



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Journey to the (far, far) West: Biking the Shimanami Kaido

By Karen Lee

I have a confession: the pursuit of bunnies introduced me to the Shimanami Kaido. Last September, I visited an ALT friend in Imabari, a coastal city in northern Ehime about a two and a half hour drive away from Miyoshi on non-toll roads. We had planned to take a bus and ferry to Okunoshima (more commercially known as bunny island), but the night before we decided to bike as far as we could and then take the ferry. That plan took us on the Shimanami Kaido (しまなみ海道), a 70km expressway and bike route that traverses six islands and seven suspension bridges to connect Shikoku (Imabari, Ehime) and Honshu (Onomichi, Hiroshima).

In April, I had the chance to return and make the 140km round trip. Biking, when possible, has always been my favorite mode of transportation --- it's faster than walking and is also open-air so you feel like you're interacting with your surroundings as you're traveling, and biking the Shimanami Kaido offers some beautiful views of the Setouchi region. From the Shikoku side, bikes can be rented (helmet and lock included) from Imabari station or

Sunrise Itoyama, a bike terminal located before the first and longest bridge, Kurushima Kaikyo Bridge. The route is superbly marked with a blue line that runs right along the road's wide shoulder and periodic labels that show the number of kilometers left until Onomichi. It's virtually impossible to get lost. Tourist maps also show other routes that go through various sightseeing spots, but those are usually longer or have more challenging terrain.



Crossing the border between Ehime and Hiroshima on Tatara Bridge.

I took 3 days to bike to Onomichi and back. My first day was the longest and traveling to Ono-

michi took me 9 hours, including breaks. The only significant inclines on the marked route are going from ground level to bridge level, but the slopes are gentle and easily rideable with your bike on the lowest gear, and the way up also offers the best views of the bridges and the ocean. The last bridge between Mukaishima and Onomichi is only open to cars, but bikers can take a



Helpful signposts like this one are located everywhere along the Shimanami Kaido. Behind it, you can see the blue-marked road.

short 10-minute ferry ride for just 110 yen. Each of the 6 islands has a different landscape and charm -- Oshima

has lots of old Japanese houses and a Rose Garden off of the main road; the route through Hakatajima is the shortest and their rest stop (道の駅) has some amazing *shio ramen*; traveling through Ikuchijima takes you right along the coast and In-noshima is hilly with citrus farms (the Setouchi region is famous for citrus, including *mikan*, *has-saku*, and lemons) and some of the largest *daikon* plants I've ever seen. In Onomichi, I spent my



The Hill of Hope in Kosanji temple, Ikuchijima, which boasts cool marble sculptures and an unparalleled view of the Seto Inland Sea.

second morning meandering along the Onomichi temple walk, a 2.5 kilometer trek that passes 25 Buddhist temples, and biked 20km back to spend the night in Ikuchijima. Before biking the final 50km to Imabari the next day, I explored Kosanji, a Buddhist temple and monument of filial piety that has interesting landmarks including a marble garden and an underground cave of Buddhas.

At the end, my body hurt in places I didn't know existed, but I would make the trip again in a heartbeat. Having lived in places like Beijing, where cars seem intent on running cyclists over, and San Francisco, where the bike lanes are nonexistent and



The 1480km long Tatara Bridge connects Omishima and Ikuchijima, the 3rd and 4th islands from Imabari.

bikers often risk being incapacitated by carelessly opened car doors, it was amazing to travel along a route made for cyclists. All the conbinis on the route even have racks for parking your bike. There are also various bike terminals all along the route so it's entirely possible to just do certain sections as well. The Shimanami Kaido will start charging tolls for bikers after March 31st 2019, so head over while you can still get to Honshu for free!



Interview: Green Fingers at Awa Open Gardens

By Kiyomi Fujii & Daralyn Yee

Have you ever heard of the term “open garden”? Open gardens are rooted in the English culture of opening one’s garden for public viewing. The event “Awa Open Gardens” started in 2013, and is one of the most popular events that is held in Awa City. Thousands of people come to visit each year to see these wonderful gardens. This year we visited the home of Ms. Toshiko Yoshida to learn about what goes in to hosting a garden at this prestigious event.



Ms. Toshiko Yoshida enjoys her garden.

What brought you to gardening? How long have you been raising plants?

I love flowers so much. I started about 20 years ago. I started with buying a young tree, then as I started to plant one after another, and before I knew it, it became a garden.

How many plants are you taking care of?

Let's say, about 200 trees and 400 flowers. I've counted the trees but not the flowers.

What is the special attraction of your garden? Which plant are you especially fond of?

Well, in the center, there is a large tulip tree. It blooms in May, its blossoms are similar to the appearance of tulips. I planted a little young tree of only one meter high 18 years ago. Now it's the symbol tree of my garden and it attracts so many people.

How did you join Awa Open Garden?

One of my friends invited me; it looked enjoyable and I decided to join.



What do you think are the benefits of community gardening in regards to town development?

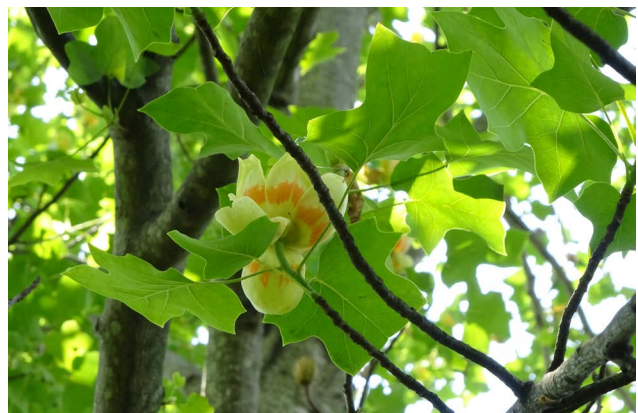
In recent years, when people hear "Awa City", beautiful gardens come to their mind. Community gardening has established a new symbol for our city. Our city enjoys the increased publicity.

What impressed you the most through your interactions with visitors?

I realized how many people are fascinated with flowers. From this experience, I became sure that flowers truly have a soothing and calming effect on everyone.

What is gardening to you?

Gardening is my source of energy and of healing, too.



The tulip tree, the symbol of Ms. Yoshidas garden, is starting to bloom.

What future plans or activities do you have instore for your garden?

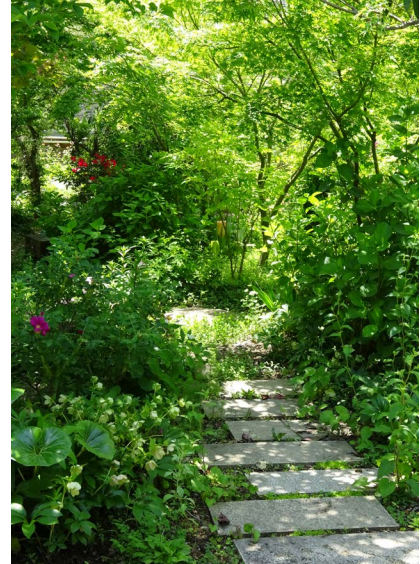
I hope to maintain this for at least another 5 years. I will make it sweeter little by little at my own pace.

Could you give advice to gardening fans and beginners?

You can just start by enjoying a small young tree or a small flower plant that you like.

Do you have any specific stories or episodes about the garden?

One day I found that one of my trees gathers honey bees a lot. That type of tree is rare, so I decided to give other people the seedlings. I can't wait to see the growth of the next generation of trees, and look forward to them blooming so that a lot of honey bees will gather around them.

**Letter from SUKETO NAKAYOSHI**

By Kazue Inoue (Center for Early Childhood Education and Care SUKETO NAKAYOSHI)

The month of June and the beginning of July is called "Tsuyu", and it is the period when it rains the most in the year. Though in Japan this is not considered to be the middle of summer, it starts to become hot and humid during this period. In these weather conditions, children can have a heat stroke, so please take caution.

Symptoms of Heat Stroke:

Red in the face, body is hot, excessive sweating, sluggish movement, nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness/headache, cramps, and unable to urinate.

How to Prevent Heat Stroke:

Hydrate frequently, wear a hat, wear clothes with good air circulation, spend less time outside in hot and humid weather, refrain from leaving children in the car by themselves, and be cautious of heat from the ground.

When you Suspect it could be Heat Stroke:

Move your child to the shade and provide them with hydration and sodium (For sports drinks, dilute to a 1:2-3 ratio, for water, add a pinch of salt to 1 Liter of water), and elevate their legs. In order to lower the body temperature, cover both arm pits, neck area, and groin area with ice

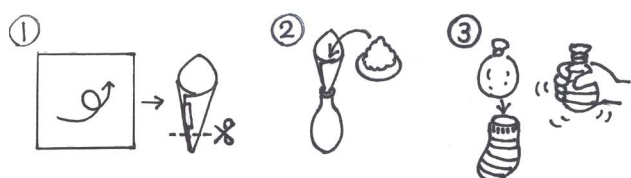
packs or a wet towel.

*If your child is lethargic and unresponsive, take them to the doctors right away. Also, call for an ambulance immediately if your child seems to lose consciousness, is having a seizure, or has a high fever of 40 C.

* * *

Squeeze Toy

- 1) First, make a funnel by rolling up a 10cmx10cm piece of construction paper. Keep the cone in place by taping the edge of the paper wrapped around the cone.
 - 2) Insert the tip of the paper cone in to the balloon, then fill the balloon with potato starch, rice, or beads. Then, tie the tip of the balloon. (At this point, be sure that all of the air from the balloon is deflated from the balloon)
 - 3) Place the filled balloon in to a small cloth sock (A dog or baby's sock will work), then close it with a rubber band.
- *Play with it by squeezing it.



Japanese Lesson

By Yoko Aoki

おねがいします

Today we will study about 「おねがいします」.

「Noun (を) おねがいします」

- ① When buying a product at a shop or ordering something at a restaurant

*It is a politer expression to use compared to 「Noun (を) ください」.

- これ (を) おねがいします。
- このりんごを 3つおねがいします。
- カレーライスと オレンジジュースをおねがいします。



- ② When you want to receive something

- すみません。{ お水 / 部屋のかぎ } をおねがいします。

- ③ When making a request

- これ (を) おねがいします。(コンビニなどで)

↓
例: 支払い / 宅配便

- { 修理 / 配達 / 予約 / コピー } をおねがいします。
- { 禁煙席 / 喫煙席 } をおねがいします (レストランなどで)
- { もういちど / ゆっくり } おねがいします。(日本語がわからないとき)
- { 英語で / ○○語で } おねがいします。



- ④ When meeting someone for the first time

- はじめまして。どうぞよろしくおねがいします。

- ⑤ When telling the taxi driver your desired destination

- 徳島駅まで おねがいします。



- ⑥ When asking for someone

- すみません、○○さんをおねがいします。

Practice: Remember May's Japanese Lesson and choose the appropriate answer.

Ex) すみません。かさをかして (ください・おねがいします)。

コーヒーを1つ (ください・おねがいします)。

- 日本語がわかりません。英語で (ください・おねがいします)。
- スマートフォンの修理を (ください・おねがいします)。
- この料理の名前をおしえて (ください・おねがいします)。
- ハンバーガーを2つ (ください・おねがいします)。
- 一万円を千円札10枚に両替を (ください・おねがいします)。



Vocabulary:

カレーライス = Curry and rice	オレンジジュース = Orange juice	支払い = Payment
宅配便 = Home delivery service	修理 = Repair	配達 = Delivery
予約 = Reservation	コピー = Copy	禁煙席 = Non-smoking seat
喫煙席 = Smoking seat	スマートフォン = Smartphone	この料理の名前 = Name of this dish
ハンバーガー = Hamburger	一万円 = 10,000 yen	千円札 = 1,000 yen bill
両替 = exchange money		

Answers: 1) おねがいします 2) おねがいします 3) ください 4) ください・おねがいします 5) おねがいします

Awa Shoku: Eat Japan Blue!

By Lance Kita

With the rainy season soon to hit us with humid, cloudy, moldy days, it's easy to feel a little blue. May I suggest...eating some Japan Blue? "Japan Blue" is not some Asian berry, but Japanese indigo (*ai* 藍). Yes, you heard me correctly. How is it possible to eat the stuff that colors your jeans? Read on if you're dye-ing to find out.

Indigo had an important role in Tokushima's economic prosperity during the Edo period. The banks of the Yoshino River have nurtured crops of indigo plants since ancient times. By the 1400s, there were records of indigo leaves being shipped to the Kansai area, suggesting that it was a profitable crop for the province that was in demand in more urban areas. Then, in the mid-1500s, a process was introduced to ferment and steam the dried leaves into a substance called *sukumo* (糀) which yielded a superior concentrated dyeing compound, and propelled Awa Province (Tokushima's former name) to be the leading indigo-producing region in Japan during the Edo Period (1600-1868). Towns like *Wakimachi* (脇町) (in present-day Mima City) owe their luxurious *udatsu* (うだつ) architecture to the prosperous sales of "*Awa Ai*."

Unfortunately, the Meiji period brought an influx of imported indigo and synthetic compounds, and Japanese indigo fell out of popularity. Today, Tokushima still supplies the majority of the *sukumo* in Japan, but the areas of cultivation have greatly decreased.

But can we eat indigo? There is a local saying: "Indigo farmers don't get sick" (*Aishokunin wa byouki shirazu* 藍職人は病氣知らず), and it turns out that many of the farmers ate indigo leaves as tempura, used the seeds in tea, and ate the sprouts as a side garnish with sashimi. Recent research shows that indigo has many compounds that have health benefits. It's rich in vitamin C, has almost four times the antioxidant properties of blueberries, and may lower cholesterol. Traditional medicine has used indigo for its anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties.



Tea, candies, and sweets made with...Japan Blue??

One of the easiest ways to enjoy indigo is in tea. Both the seeds and the dried leaves can be steeped in hot water. They are often combined with other teas to balance the flavor. Word of caution: Do not pick wild indigo leaves or seeds for this. Buy products made expressly for drinking. Another new development is powdered indigo. Not only is this easier to digest, it can be incorporated into a variety of food products. Many of the gift shops around Tokushima City feature Japanese sweets, cookies, cakes, and candies flavored with indigo. You can also buy the powder itself and mix it into smoothies or sprinkle it into your coffee, juice, tea, or any drink to fortify it. It's greenish-blue tint makes it a pleasant addition to a dip or dressing for vegetables. You can even add some to your cake, cookie, or bread dough for homemaking that is colorful and healthy.

Many restaurants and cafes are starting to use indigo as an ingredient, so be on the look out of bluish chiffon cake, indigo-hued pasta, indigo *furikake* (ふりかけ) to sprinkle over rice, and even indigo ramen!

With a new avenue for using indigo, the awareness of this great natural product may foster a greater re-appreciation of the dye and be a ray of sunshine for *Awa Ai*. Be on the lookout for edible indigo as you explore our prefecture.

(Some of the information comes from the www.aisyokunin.com and japanblue-ai.jp websites.)

Events & Memoranda

2018 Tokushima Prefecture Japanese Speech Contest 2018 徳島県日本語弁論大会

Overseas residents whose native language is not Japanese will be giving a speech in Japanese on various topics such as cultural differences, their experiences with life in Tokushima, and more. Please come watch and cheer on the participants! A tea party will follow after the contest.

When: July 22nd (Sun) Speech Contest: 13:30 - 16:30 Tea Party: 16:45-17:45

Where: Awagin Hall (Tokushima Prefecture Kyodo Bunka Kaikan) 5F

Info: 088-656-3303 TOPIA

Admission Fee: FREE



37th Beethoven Ninth Symphony Concert – 100th Anniversary 第 37 回ベートーヴェン「第九」交響曲演奏会 – 100 周年

When: June 2nd (Sat) 18:00- & 3rd (Sun) 13:00-

Where: Naruto City Culture Hall

Fee: Advance tickets: General Admission



2,000 yen, Students 500 yen

At the door: General Admission

2,500 yen, Students 500 yen

*There will be a "Naruto Ninth Symphony" Exchange After Party held after the concert at the Citizen's Hall.

Info: Ninth Symphony Brand Promotion Office

Tel: 088-684-1224

日時: 6月2日(土) 18時開演

6月3日(日) 13時開演

場所: 鳴門市文化会館

料金: 全席自由

前売【一般】2,000円 【学生】500円

当日【一般】2,500円 【学生】500円

※演奏会終了後に「なるとの第九」アフター交流会を開催 (場所: 市民会館)

問い合わせ: 「第九」ブランド化推進室

TEL: 088-684-1224



Teramachi Japanese Iris Festival 寺町花しょうぶ祭り

Visit Teramachi Park to see approximately 3,000 Japanese iris in bloom!

約 3000 本の花しょうぶが咲く寺町公園にお越しください♪

When: June 10th (Sun) 9:30-

Where: Area surrounding Teramachi Park located in Mima Town, Mima City

Fee: Free

Info: Mima Tourism Bureau

Tel: 0883-53-8599

日時: 6月10日(日) 9:30 ~

場所: 美馬市美馬町寺町公園、その周辺

料金: 無料

問い合わせ: 美馬観光ビューロー

TEL: 0883-53-8599

Hahagawa Firefly Festival 母川ほたる祭り

When: June 2nd (Sat) - 9th (Sat) 20:00-21:30

Where: Kaiyo-cho Takaen Hahagawa Riverbed

Fee: Takase boat: Adults 500 yen; Elementary and middle school students 200 yen

Info: Kaiyo Town Tourism Association

Tel: 0884-76-3050

日時: 6月2日(土) ~ 9(土)

20:00 ~ 21:30

場所: 海陽町高園 母川河川敷

料金: 高瀬舟 大人 500円、小・中学生 200円

問い合わせ: 海陽町観光協会

TEL: 0884-76-3050





Events & Memoranda

Hisayabu Hydrangea Festival 久慈あじさい祭り

Many people visit this festival, held at the Hisayabu Amida Hall, every year in June when the hydrangeas are in full bloom.

毎年、あじさいが咲く6月に、久慈阿弥陀堂であじさい祭りが行われ、多くの方が訪れます。

When: June 17th (Sun)

日時：6月17日（日）

Where: Hisayabu Amida Hall, Ichu, Tsurugi Town

場所：つるぎ町一字久慈 久慈阿弥陀堂

Fee: Free

料金：無料

Info: Tsurugi Town Commerce and Tourism Division

お問合せ：つるぎ町商工観光課

Tel: 0883-62-3111

TEL: 0883-62-3111

Multilingual Information Application Important Information on Living in Japan on Hand

iOS/Android Application

The Council of Local Authorities (CLAIR) offers free information for overseas residents living in Japan in 14 different languages through the iOS/Android application “Japan Life Guide”. Use this application for your day-to-day life and as a useful guide during natural disasters.

intensity 5 occurs, an Emergency Earthquake Alert will be sent through this application in all 14 languages.

Application Functions

Information on residence requirements, housing, education, and medical care through 17 different topics with easy to understand explanations in 14 different languages can be found through this application. When an earthquake over seismic

Information is offered in the following 14 languages: English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Thai, German, French, Russian, Japanese (with furigana), Easy Japanese

Download this application on your smartphone or tablet.

Web: <http://www.clair.or.jp/tagengo/>

iOS App Store/ Android Google Play: Search for “Japan Life Guide” or “多言語生活情報”

Yuki Abalone Market 由岐あわびの市

Besides selling fresh seafood there will also be game and activity booths. The first 50 visitors will receive an Abalone soup.

当日は、新鮮な魚介類の販売のほか、ゲーム・体験コーナーもあります。先着50名様にアワビ汁の振る舞います。

When: June 10th (Sun) 9:00-13:00

日時：6月10日（日）9時～13時

Where: In front of JR Yuki station

場所：JR 由岐駅前グラウンド

Info: Minami Town Chamber of Commerce

問い合わせ：美波町商工会

Tel: 0884-78-0919

TEL: 0884-78-0919



Counselling Service at TOPIA・トピアの相談窓口

TOPIA offers a counselling and advisory service to all foreign residents to help with issues involving accidents, working conditions, housing, visas, international marriage, and more. Counselling is available in English and Japanese. Please note that although every effort will be made, we may not be able to deal with all cases.

Everyday, 10:00 - 18:00 (closed during the New Year's holidays)

Tel: 088-656-3303 or 088-656-3320 (allows three-way conversations with an interpreter)