Kaijin—Shell Men

LIXIL GALLERY

Japanese Conchologists whose Shell Collections Launched an Epoch **8 March-26 May 2018**

Foreword

A remarkable variety of shellfish inhabit the waters of Japan owing to the northward Kuroshio Current and southward Oyashio Current. Since ancient times, the Japanese have felt the magical allure of shellfish, eaten them, and used their shells in daily life. In the Edo period (1603-1868), natural scientists collected shells out of natural curiosity and compiled them in beautifully detailed reference books. Thereafter, in the Meiji period (1868-1912), shellfish came to be researched scientifically. At this time, there appeared *kaijin* ("shell men")- specialized researchers and amateur collectors-who together built the world of modern Japanese conchology.

This exhibition introduces 10 such *kaijin* and displays shells carefully selected from their collections along with related historical materials. By knowing their world-conchologists and shell collectors who devoted their lives to shells-we will discover deeper beauty and fascination in their shell specimens. Keen researchers exploring the world of land snails . . . collectors seeking out shells beautiful, tiny, or rare from all over the world. For the first time, the collections of the *kaijin* who launched an epoch are displayed together in a single venue. We invite you to experience an unprecedented, new world of shells.

We wish to extend our warmest appreciation to everyone whose efforts have made this exhibition possible.

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Kaijin—Japanese Malacologists and Shell Collectors

Takashi Okutani (Honorary President , Malacological Society of Japan)

Collecting shells—a hobby enjoyed by everyone from kindergarten pupils to kings and aristocrats. Its popularity owes not only to the shells' beauty, patterns, and fascinating shapes but also to their size, fitting comfortably in one hand, and the ease of maintaining them. But, shells are also a subject of natural science, and some amateur collections in fact hold great value for research by taxonomists. Collectors, meanwhile, consult researchers to learn the names of the shells they collect. Such cooperation between collectors and researchers has propelled the development of conchology.

In Japan, the man who first contributed to modern conchology was Yoichiro Hirase (1859-1925), founder of the Hirase Conchological Museum. In the beginning, he sought out the American malacologist Henry Pilsbry to identify the shells in his collection. In time, however, Hirase fostered knowledgeable researchers such as Tokubei Kuroda (1886-1987), the so-called "shell saint."

Kuroda, calling on collectors and young researchers in the Kansai region, founded the Malacological Society of Japan in 1928 and laid a foundation for modern malacology in Japan. A pupil of Kuroda's, Tadashige Habe (1916-2001) described over 1,300 new taxa in his lifetime. Many of the new species Kuroda and Habe described were discovered from large collections built by Tetsumyo Kira, Akibumi Teramachi, Ryosuke Kawamura, Kin'ichi Sakurai, and Kiyoshi Ito. Also, Habe, along with Katsura Oyama, poured great energy into helping Kuroda complete *THE SEA SHELLS OF SAGAMI BAY* based on Emperor Hirohito's large collection.

Currently, the Malacological Society of Japan, which in 2018 celebrates its 90th anniversary, has over 600 members. Among them, collectors far outnumber professional taxonomists—a sign of the continuing vital cooperation between amateurs and researchers.

The Japanese conchology pioneer who invested his life and fortune

Yoichiro Hirase (1859-1925)

It was Yoichiro Hirase, an early private researcher, who launched the field of Japanese conchology. Dispatching shell gatherers throughout Japan and to China and Taiwan, he classified and organized the shell specimens. His collection amounted to more than 8,000 species. Hirase also operated a shell specimen trade, selling shells to researchers and museums overseas. The world-renowned American malacologist Henry Pilsbry obtained several thousand species from Hirase and identified many as newly discovered species.

This being Hirase's achievement, as well, many of the shells have scientific names commemorating both Pilsbry and Hirase.

Hirase was born the eldest son of a wealthy village headman on Awaji Island. Although physically frail, he was raised in an intellectually stimulating environment. In 1887, he moved to Kyoto. Making a fortune in the poultry business, he joined the Kyoto Museological Society and sought to deepen his knowledge of archeology and art.

Hirase became involved with shells through an encounter in Kyoto with two missionaries who were collecting shells. Asked to gather shells, Hirase ultimately invested his entire life and fortune in the world of shells. From around 1900, he began to supply shells to the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, the American National Museum of Natural History, and Harvard University Museum of Comparative Zoology. Needing an assistant, Hirase brought in a 15-year old youth from his home village. That youth, Tokubei Kuroda, eventually became Japan' s foremost conchology authority. Hirase had Kuroda study English, bought him glasses, and set him to ordering valuable specialized books and magazines from overseas. That he trained Kuroda in museum work and opened the door for him to become a world-renowned conchologist was another of Hirase's important achievements. His son Shintaro Hirose also became a conchologist under his influence.

In 1907, Yoichiro Hirase published Japan's first conchological journal, *Kairui Zasshi*, and in 1913 founded "The Hirase Conchological Museum" using his own funds. The museum published *Kai Chigusa*, an illustrated book that won high acclaim overseas. The museum nevertheless met with financial difficulty a year after opening and closed in 1919. Hirase himself died six years thereafter at the age of 66.

Inheriting his father's passion, published Japan's first color guide to shells

Shintaro Hirase (1884-1939)

Shintaro Hirase, the elder son of Yoichiro Hirase, was Japan's foremost conchologist of the early 20th century. His *A collection of Japanese shells with illustrations in natural colours* (Matsumura-sanshodo), first published in 1934, contained pictures of 1,360 kinds of shells along with their scientific names, Japanese names, and habitats and was widely enjoyed as a field guide to shells.

Born in today's Fukura, Minamiawaji on Awaji Island in 1884, Shintaro moved to Kyoto as a child with his father Yoichiro. Despite the many conchology enthusiasts visiting his father's shell shop, Hirase Shoten, Shintaro did not feel strongly interested in shells. On entering Kyoto University, he studied literature and steeped himself in psychology.

In 1914, the year after the Hirase Shell Museum opened, Shintaro moved to Tokyo and entered the zoology course in the Tokyo Imperial University science department.

There, he researched mollusks until 1922. In 1918, starting with "Concerning one kind of parasitic spiral," he published several essays each year on shellfish classifications, ecology, anatomy, and other subjects.

In this period, his father's Hirase Shell Museum fell into debt, and museum operation grew tight. Shintaro in due course chose the path of a malacologist and teacher in Tokyo. While still in graduate school, he began lecturing on natural science in the Meiji University preparatory course and later worked as an instructor in the Hosei University preparatory course and in secondary schools attached to Seikei University.

As a teacher, Shintaro was a humane, deeply tolerant person who enjoyed the respect of his associates and students.

Even in his natural science classes, he displayed deep erudition in philosophy, religion, and literature.

Like his father, Shintaro had refined tastes. He liked music and played the piano and clarinet, and was fluent in several languages and read foreign novels in their original languages. He also had a weakness for spending money on Nihonga paintings. When giving Japanese names to shellfish species, he named them after his daughters.

Shintaro Hirase died while at his desk, working on a revised version of *A collection of Japanese shells with illustrations in natural colours*. His last words, it is said, were "Give the cockscomb pearl mussels some water, please, so their nerves do not dry out." He was a conchologist through and through. Age at death: fifty-five.

A giant in the field of malacology who researched shells until the age of 100

Tokubei Kuroda (1886-1987)

The second son of a farm family in Fukura-ura, Hyogo prefecture, Tokubei Kuroda received excellent grades as a secondary school student. Unable to advance farther in his education, however, he took employment in the town hall. Here, a change came in his life; Yoichiro Hirase, who had a trade selling specimens of shells, invited him to Kyoto. Thus, in 1901 at the age of 15, Kuroda entered the shop "Hirose Shoten" as a houseboy helping with housework. By degrees, he learned to put the storage room in order, wash shells, manage the shell specimens, and make labels.

In 1907, when Hirase launched the journal *Kairui Zasshi*, Kuroda became an assistant editor. When the "The Hirase Conchological Museum" opened in 1913, he worked as a guide and researcher, and served as Hirase's righthand man until the museum closed six years later.

Having lost his employment with the museum's closing, Kuroda was hired as an aid in the science department at Kyoto University by Prof. Takuji Ogawa, the father of physicist Hideki Yukawa. His primary duty was to administer conchological reference books and magazines purchased from Germany. In 1928 at the age of 42, he founded the Japan Malacology Society along with the conchologists Isao Taki and Iwao Taki. Despite a severe shortage of materials during and after the war, he continued writing essays and publishing the Society's magazine, *Venus*, and embarked on collecting expeditions in the Philippines and other regions. Following the war, he became an advisor for the GHQ's natural resources department, writing theses on the side. On turning 61 in 1947, he obtained a doctorate from the Kyoto University science department on the basis of his "Research on the Distribution and Classification of Japanese Land Snails."

Kuroda was strict in his methods of shell research, but even then, people continually gathered around him eager for his teaching. He presented lectures to the Emperor Showa (Hirohito), a biologist, as many as 50 times in his life. His *The Sea Shells of Sagami Bay* (1971) is a comprehensive monograph on shells collected by the emperor at Sagami Bay. It was co-authored with the malacologists Tadashige Habe and Katsura Oyama.

On turning 80, Kuroda moved to Nishinomiya Kaisei Hospital, in part for his wife's medical treatment, at the invitation of the shell scholar Norio Kikuchi, the hospital's director. There, he gave lectures at Kikuchi's "Hanshin Shell Symposium" until the age of 99.

In his lifetime, Tokubei Kuroda identified 100 new genera and 650 new species and published over 500 books and essays. He continued to research, teach, and lecture until just before his 100th birthday. A shell man with strong spirit, superior retention of knowledge, and sober, honest approach to research, he was indeed a giant in the field of Japanese malacology.

Two brothers' dreams, realized— Kikuchi Shell Museum and Hanshin Shell Symposium

Norio Kikuchi (1915-2013)

It was Norio Kikuchi, doctor and director at Nishinomiya Kaisei Hospital, who made Nishinomiya City a malacology mecca.

As children, Norio and his older brother Takemasa enjoying collecting shells together at the seashore. Their dream was to open a shell museum. After the war, Norio was interned at a Siberian labor camp for three years. On his return, he and Takemasa began spending about a month, each year, giving free medical treatment on Amami-oshima Island, where medical conditions were lacking under the U.S. occupation.

During their work on the island, from 1955 to 1967, the brothers rediscovered their love for shells. In intervals during medical work, they observed the local shellfish ecology and collected a large volume of numerous shell species.

In 1965, they established the Kikuchi Malacology Institute in Nishinomiya. The following year, they invited the aging Kuroda and his wife to Nishinomiya Kaisei Hospital from Kyoto and created a laboratory and reference room for Kuroda on the site. On this occasion, they also launched the Hanshin Shell Symposium. Shell aficionados, saying, "The shell legend has come to Nishinomiya from Kyoto," gathered from far away once a month to hear Kuroda speak.

In 1968, Takamasa died. Norio's discouragement in his loss was profound. In 1984, the Kikuchi Shell Museum envisioned by the brothers finally opened. Its collection contained 8,000 species of shellfish collected by Norio.

In 1987, Tokubei Kuroda passed away. Norio was with him when he died, and he thereafter donated Kuroda's vast collection of specimens and materials to Nishinomiya City to prevent them from being scattered and lost. At that time, he proposed the establishment of municipal shell museum, and in 1999, the Nishinomiya Shell Museum opened and began operating, even amid the collapse of Japan's economic bubble and the Great Hanshin Earthquake.

In 2013, Norio Kikuchi died and his collection at the Kikuchi Shell Museum was donated to the Nishinomiya Shell Museum and reunited with Kuroda's collection.

When moving to Nishinomiya, Kuroda had at first stubbornly refused to become Norio Kikuchi's house guest. Norio, however, arranged for the packing of Kuroda's belongings and half-forced him to move in. Thanks to this shell man's passion, Nishinomiya became a shell city.

The Sun of Iwate's Natural History World: now back in the spotlight

Genzo Toba (1872-1946)

In prewar Japan, Genzo Toba won acclaim as "the Sun of Iwate' s Natural History World." People ranked him with the great Kumagusa Minakata, saying "Kumagusa of the West, Genzo of the East." With Iwate prefecture as his base, he made important contributions to the fields of entomology, botany, zoology, conchology, geology, and archeology. Toba was born in present-day Rikuzentakata on the coast of Iwate in 1872, the eldest son of a farming family. In his childhood, he grew interested in insects and plants while roaming the mountains and fields. Although his education ended at secondary school, he studied under first-rate researchers in every field and, moreover, achieved highly original research results.

Toba began to research shells in 1907 at the age of 35 and, at this time, developed friendships with the first-rate conchologists Yutaro Iwakawa, Yoichiro Hirase, and Tokubei Kuroda.

The following year, he was transferred for three years to the Agricultural Experimental Farm, Office of the Governor-General of Taiwan, and used his time to gather shells in Taiwan.

On returning, he continued to collect shells, walking the length of the circuitous coastline from Rikuzentakata to Ofunato picking up shells, ultimately gathering 20,000 specimens. He identified 2 new species of shellfish, 4 species were named after him, and he gave Japanese names to 19 species. When the Japan Malacology Society was founded in 1928, he was listed as a founder.

At 42, when starting to research fossils, he became acquainted with author Kenji Miyazawa. The characters Tovaski and Gensoski appearing in Miyazawa's story, *The Cat Office*, were created in homage to Toba and the story *Dokuga* inspired by Toba' s research, it is said.

From the age of 50, Toba taught at Iwate Teacher Training School for 23 years. In the same period, he taught natural science at Iwate Prefectural Toryo High School (a Morioka evening school). Students were captivated by Toba, who stood before them, sweat dripping from his forehead, telling humorous stories about shells and insects. Never did a student play hooky, it is said. Though tired from both work and study, and fighting drowsiness, they listened with eyes gleaming.

Toba's 20,000 shell specimens were stored at the Sea & Shell Museum founded in Rikuzentakata in 1994. That museum, however, was devastated by the tsunami occurring during the Great Tohoku Earthquake of 2011. Currently, a project of rescuing cultural properties is underway, the first of its kind in Japan. Due to the project and its findings, Genzo Toba is re-emerging into the spotlight.

Amateur extraordinaire who spread the love of shells to countless people

Tetsumyo Kira (1888-1965)

Tetsumyo Kira, employed both as an elementary school teacher and temple head priest, had an odd career. Born in 1888 in Saga prefecture, Kira at seven was adopted into Ryubi-ji, a temple in today's Shijonawate City in Osaka prefecture. After graduating from secondary school, he at fourteen became a substitute teacher and eventually received formal employment. Interested in animals since childhood, especially shellfish, he began to collect freshwater and land snails when 15 or 16 years old.

Kira is known for *Shells of the Western Pacific in Color*, a book displaying 1,200 species of shells from his collection in clear photographs with commentaries. After its publication in 1954, it became a must-have book among shell aficionados. Many people discovered an interest in shells through their encounter with Kira's book.

That Kira, an amateur, could publish such an excellent illustrated reference books owes to the support of Kyoto shell collector Akifumi Teramachi, who helped Kira foster a foundation in shell taxonomy. Kira frequently visited Teramachi's house to see and study the immense number of specimens he had collected in Okinawa, Wakayama, Tohoku, Tosa, and southern Kyushu. Needless to say, another teacher was Tokubei Kuroda. Kira often visited Kuroda's laboratory at Kyoto University to receive his guidance in taxonomy.

In 1934 at the age of 45, Kira became a member of the Malacological Society of Japan. His great achievement was to publish the Society's newsletter, *Yumehamaguri*, singlehandedly for 14 years from 1946 after Japan's defeat. *Yumehamaguri* was the predecessor of the Society's current research newsletter, *Chiribotan*. Kira handled all the work himself, from obtaining printing supplies amid the dearth of materials after the war to text editing, layout, printing, binding, and distribution.

Artistically talented, he also created his own diagrams, and unable to print photographs, he pasted them in the newsletter one by one. At a time when people throughout Japan were struggling to survive, and amid his grief at the loss of his wife, he wholly absorbed himself in publishing *Yumehamaguri*, often neglecting to eat. Without Kira, the newsletter's goal of connecting mollusk scholars and aficionados could not have been achieved.

Suffering poor physical health, Kira in 1959 discontinued *Yumehamaguri* with its 100th issue. Its spirit was nevertheless carried on in *Chiribotan*, the new Society newsletter coordinated by Isao Taki.

The Beautiful Naturalist: the first Japanese to gather birds, shells, and insects from the South Pacific

Yaeko Yamamura (1899-1996)

Yaeko Yamamura was born to a wealthy Tokyo family in 1899. Both of her parents had studied in the United States. After graduating from Tokyo Jogakkan School for Women, she on two occasions, in 1925 and 1936, spent a year in Basalin, the southern Philippines island where her father had begun operating a palm orchard.

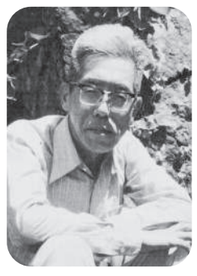
Basalin was a dream come true for Yaeko, who as a child had been a tomboy, fond of grasshoppers, and who as a Tokyo Jogakkan student had liked gazing at biological specimens in the science classroom. Exploring Basalin's forests, rivers, beaches, marshes, and caves, sometimes on hands and knees, she gathered brightly colorful south sea birds, shells, insects, and plants. Dressed in men's clothing and commanding a team of locals, she set off on trips on horseback, armed with a rifle. Once, capturing a crocodile alive, she herself drained its blood and stuffed it.

The specimens she gathered in 1925 amounted to 70 trunks of items. They included 316 birds of 41 classes and 110 species, 23 of them newly discovered species. She eventually donated her shell collection to the present-day Tokyo National Museum of Nature and Science, her alma mater Tokyo Jogakkan, and Tokyo Imperial University, and even contributed items to the Imperial Household Agency.

At a time when overseas specimens were lacking in Japan, Yamamoto's specimens were received with surprise and admiration in conchology and other scientific fields. The adoring nickname given her as a woman having intelligence, the ability to act, and beauty was "the Beautiful Naturalist."

A woman who loved specimens above all, Yaeko Yamamura died at 97 in 1996 surrounded by an enormous number of them. They were later organized and classified under the coordination of the "Komae Association." Japan's first color film movie, filmed by Yamamura, was also found.

A leading malacologist who lifted Japanese conchology to world standards



Tadashige Habe (1916-2001)

Tadashige Habe discovered over 1300 new species and genera. He recorded nearly one fifth of the some 6,500 species of Japanese shellfish known in his day.

Habe was born in 1916 in what is now Sasayama, Hyogo. After graduating from a teacher training school, he taught for three years as an elementary school teacher. It was when collecting insects on Tokuno-shima Island, while still in teacher training school, that he became fascinated by a shell he happened to pick up, so that he began to study shells.

In 1939, Habe entered the zoology course in the Kyoto University department of science. Around this time, he met Tokubei Kuroda, then an assistant in the department, and embarked on the study of the ecology and classification of shellfish. As one of the researchers, shell lovers, and students gathering around Kuroda, Habe gradually acquired the "Kuroda spirit" of looking so hard at shells he "put holes in them." In 1946, he was appointed to assist Kuroda in compiling the "Checklist of the Marine Mollusca of Japan" at the request of the GHQ natural resources department. Thus, began four years of intense labor in compiling a work covering Japan's marine shellfish, a project that ensured his future as a young conchologist. In 1949, he became an assistant in the Kyoto University science department and worked with Kuroda in the same laboratory.

On receiving his doctorate in 1957, Habe became an assistant professor in the Kyushu University science department. Thereafter, he was appointed director of zoological research at the National Museum of Nature and Science. From the 1980s, on retiring, he worked as a school of fisheries professor at Tokai University and as director of Tokai University's natural history museum.

Appointed director of the Japan Malacology Society in 1979, he served eight terms spanning 16 years, a fact showing the deep respect the society's members held for him.

Habe is also known for authoring *Shells of the Western Pacific in Color, Volume 2,* a continuation of the shell lover's bible, *Shells of the Western Pacific in Color* by Tetsuaki Kira. The Kira volume featured 1,300 species, and the Habe volume, 1,400 species. Together, they cover about half of the shellfish of Japan. While the Kira volume became renowned for its beautiful and rare shells, the Habe volumes also features familiar shells found anywhere and microscopic shells. Habe also published numerous other pictorial books. Then, Habe loved writing essays, perhaps more than anything, and possessed astonishing vitality as a scholar.

"Botan" restaurant owner and shell collector with a PhD in mineralogy

Kinichi Sakurai (1912-1993)

Kinichi Sakurai, owner of the venerable "Botan" chicken sukiyaki restaurant in Kanda, Tokyo, was also a prominent figure in the world of mineralogy.

Sakurai was born in Kanda's Renjakucho district (now Sudacho) in 1912. His family operated the restaurant "Botan," founded in 1897. Interested in minerals as a child, he frequented mineralogy clubs attended by adults but never received a specialized education in minerals.

After graduating from the Senshu University preparatory course in 1932, Sakurai assumed responsibilities as the young proprietor of "Botan" and continued to research minerals on the side as a self-taught mineralogist. From 1942, he became a part-time employee of the National Museum of Nature and Science. It was Sakurai's discovery of yugawaralite in 1952 that cast him suddenly in the limelight. Because of this research, he obtained a doctorate from Tokyo University science department. He also wrote and edited numerous books on mineralogy.

From minerals, his research expanded to include fossils and shellfish, and in 1951, he joined the Japan Malacological Society. Thereafter, Sakurai's passion for research and collecting made him widely known, even in conchological circles, for his discoveries of new species, his editing of the "*Chiribotan*" newsletter, his many essays, and the "Sakurai Specimen Room" he opened in his house in Hirakawacho.

Before his creation of the Sakurai Specimen Room, the specimens were kept in the reception area of his restaurant, "Botan." Young researchers often visited the restaurant and Specimen Room to see Sakurai's specimens, and they looked to Sakurai, whose mind was quick and intuitive, for guidance.

After Sakurai's death, his 50,000 specimens of 10,000 species were donated to the National Museum of Nature and Science, along with his essays and mineral specimens. Sakurai, wishing to create a complete collection of the shellfish of the Japanese archipelago, collected even identical specimens from different habitats and also assiduously collected deformed shells. In recent decades, many shellfish that once flourished in Japan have become ecologically valuable species owing to new fishing methods and loss of coastal shores. Sakurai's collection, thus, grows continually more valuable.

The gallant collector—from shells beautiful to shells infinitely small

Ryosuke Kawamura (1898-1993)

Malacology and particularly taxonomy have always developed through the combined efforts of shell collectors and researchers. Shell collectors possessing thousands, even ten-thousands of specimens are not simply hobbyists who love shells for their beauty; they have made valuable contributions to taxonomy.

Ryosuke Kawamura, a collector among collectors, spent nearly a half-century collecting shells, starting in the 1920s. Their number amounted to over 100,000 specimens of 10,000 species. His collection, the foremost in Japan, covers all the world' s main species of mollusks, both land and marine. It has been gifted to the National Museum of Nature and Science as the "Kawamura Collection."

Born in Shimonoseki in 1898, Kawamura graduated from Tokyo Imperial University's economics department and, in 1922, entered Yamaguchi Bank (former name). His interest in shells was ignited in 1930 by the beauty of the shells he saw sold at a souvenir shop at Enoshima Island. He joined the Malacological Society of Japan the following year.

Tutored by Isao Taki, a Society founder, he kept his favorite shell specimens in a cushioned case, dyed purple using hematoxylin as Taki taught him.

In 1940, he was transferred to Osaka and there encountered the leading malacologist Tokubei Kuroda and collectors such as Akifumi Teramachi and Tetsumyo Kira. The "Mehachi-Tengu-Kai," an association he opened in his residence during the difficult wartime and postwar years, became a hot gathering place for shell aficionados.

After the war, when Kawamura was transferred to Tokyo, the entire nation became his field of activity, and early on, he began to collect shells from abroad. Not only he did obtain precious shells from all parts of the earth, in many cases he himself collected shells in the mountains and at the ocean. Kawamura's collection continued growing right up until his death.

In *Natural Science and Museums*, Ryosuke Kawamura reflected on his fifty years of collecting, saying "Collecting is not a manner of money. One needs the kindness and support of a great many people. To succeed, one must be humble."