

# A Colony of Amur Adonis, Flower of Happiness and Longevity

Located in Kitakata City in Fukushima Prefecture, known in Japan for its ramen noodles and traditional storehouses, the Numanotaira district is home to one of the country's largest displays of Amur adonis.

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FROM mid-March to mid-April, the desolate winter fields of northeast Japan are transformed into a carpet of gold. The Numanotaira district of Yamato Town in Kitakata City is the habitat for more than a million *fukujuso* (Amur adonis, a perennial plant in the buttercup family) that bloom over an area of some five hectares, the largest display of these flowers in Japan. The brilliant yellow flowers of the Amur adonis herald the arrival of spring in this mountainous area and fill people with joy.



A cluster of Amur adonis

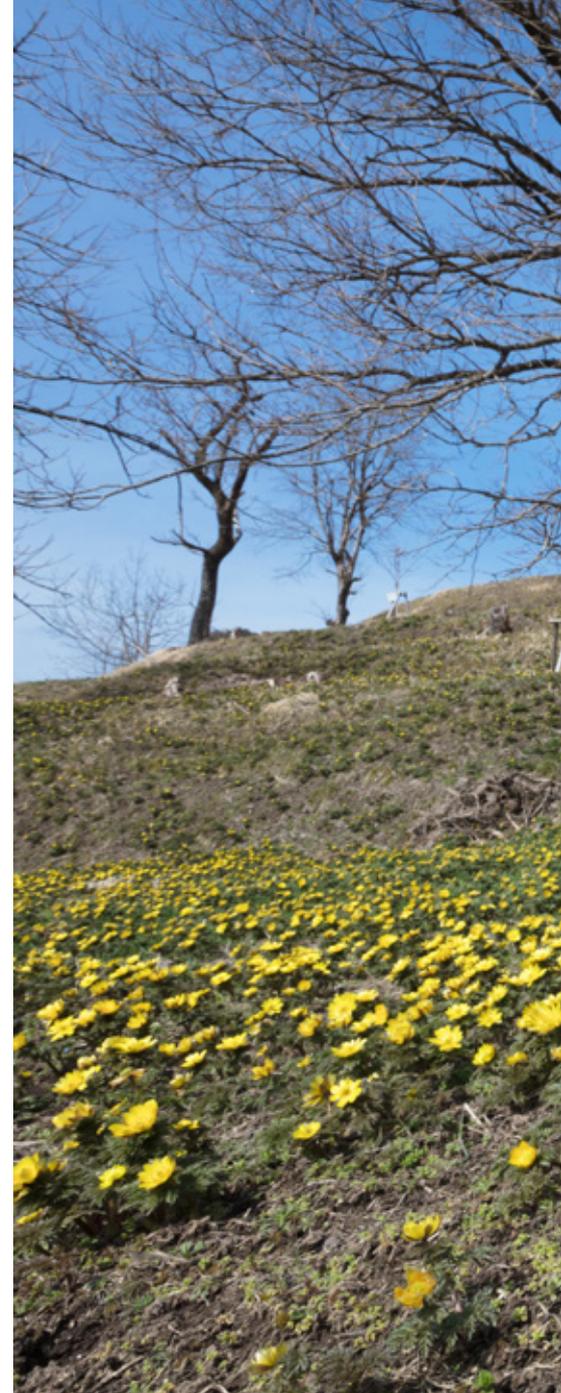
The area offers two walking trails, Yukige no Komichi and Hidamari no Komichi<sup>1</sup>, which before the coronavirus outbreak attracted many visitors who came to admire the flowers, compose haiku, or enjoy spring in their own way.

As visitors ascend the Yukige trail, the Amur adonis blooming on the slopes facing the sun are clear to see. A short distance further along the trail, the vista opens up.

“It’s a spectacular display of blooms that makes everyone who sees them exclaim in delight as soon as the flowers come into view. The petals of the Amur adonis have a glossy sheen that glitters and sparkles in the sunlight, giving the impression of a carpet of gold,” says an official of the Yamato General Branch Office of Kitakata City, which oversees the management of the area, with a sunny smile.

Amur adonis are in full bloom along the Hidamari no Komichi, a path leading from the village past Yukige no Komichi to Choshoji Temple. The temple grounds also offer a beautiful view of the flower-covered slopes.

In the winter months, the area gets heavy snowfalls. Come spring, Amur adonis can be seen not only on the slopes bathed in sunshine but also peeking out from the unmelted snow in the shade. The blooming of Amur adonis coincides with that of other wildflowers. *Azumachige* (*Anemone raddeana*) with its white



*Fukujuso* (Amur adonis) in flower in the Numanotaira district of Yamato Town, Kitakata City, Fukushima Prefecture  
Photo: AFL0

flowers, *otome-engosaku* (*Corydalis fukuharae*) with its blue flowers, and *katakuri* (Japanese dogtooth violet) with its purple flowers, together with the yellow flowers of Amur adonis, lend color to the mountain villages.

“While Kitakata City is famous for its ramen noodles, Yamato Town’s specialty is actually *soba* (buckwheat) noodles,” says the official. In March and April, *kanzarashi* soba is a unique offering in the town. These are noodles prepared from buckwheat that has been exposed to cold winter water and wind, and which



are characterized by their elastic texture and sweetness.

“Kanzarashi soba is said to have been presented to the Tokugawa shoguns in days of old,” the official says.

“The colony of Amur adonis is around ten kilometers from the center of town. Although it’s a little out of the way, I hope that after the COVID-19 situation is over, people will come and enjoy the soba noodles and the glorious profusion of these auspicious flowers, written in Japanese with the characters for ‘happiness’ and ‘longevity’<sup>ii</sup>.”

The official is also looking forward to the season when the flower comes into bloom. ㊦

i Yukige means “melting snow” and hidamari means “sunny spot.”

ii The Japanese name of the flower is *fukujuso*, written with the characters “fuku” meaning happiness and “ju” meaning longevity.



Yamato Town’s specialty *kansazarashi* soba with tempura  
Photo: TRUTTA/PIXTA