



Niigata Nishikigoi

by Mark Gardner (INPC)

Introduction

- Mark Gardner
- Bought my first Koi when I was 13
- Visited Japan for the first time in 2001
- Between 2001 and 2008 visited over 10 times
- In December 2007 moved to Ojiya for 1 year
- In August 2008 obtained a 3 year working visa
- Now work for INPC promoting Niigata and it's Nishikigoi

Content

- The history of Nishikigoi's origins in Niigata
- The development of the Nishikigoi industry through the last century
- The Nishikigoi seasons in Niigata
- Profiles on some of the leading breeders in Niigata
- Hints and tips for anyone wishing to visit Niigata

Questions

- Feel free to ask any questions as I go through the presentation

The origins of Nishikigoi in Niigata

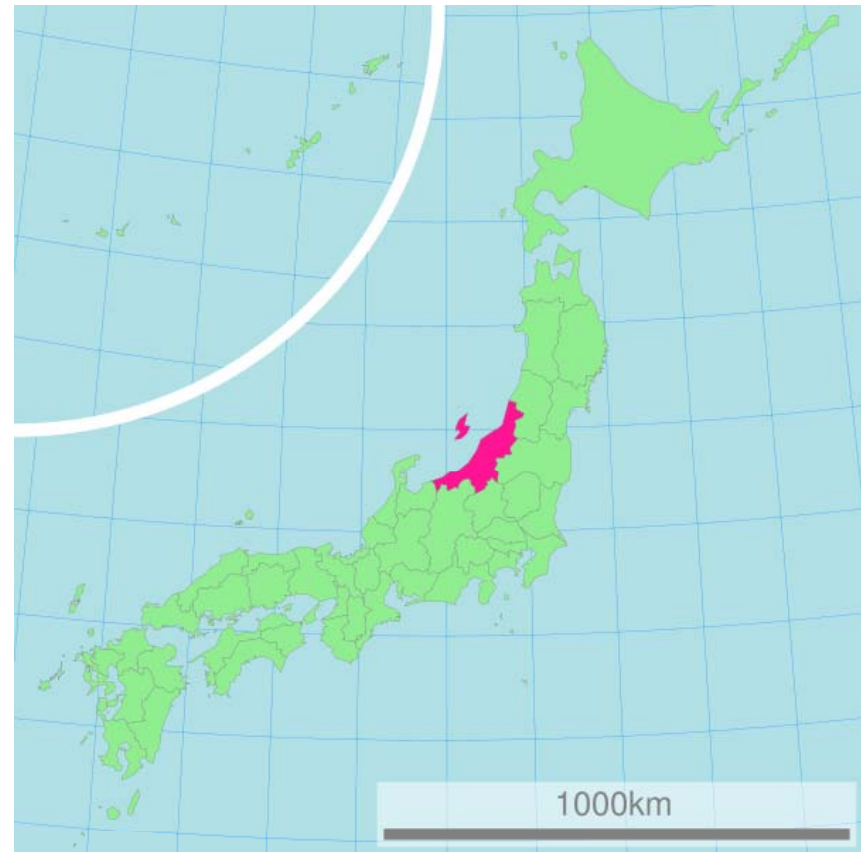
- Nishikigoi are a natural colour mutation of wild magoi
- Were it not for the peasant farmers of Yamakoshi we would have no Nishikigoi today



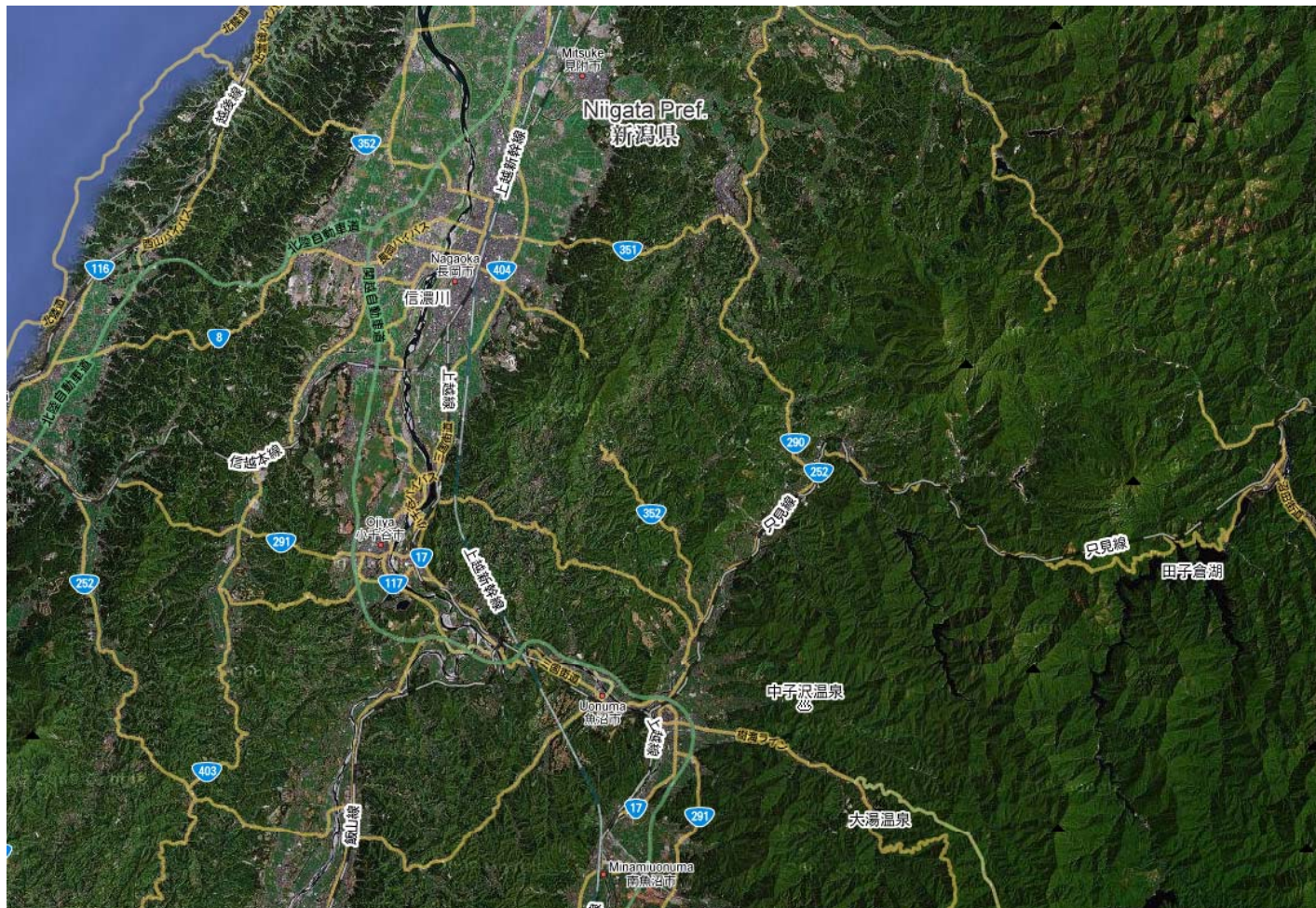
1832 woodblock print showing magoi

The origins of Nishikigoi in Niigata

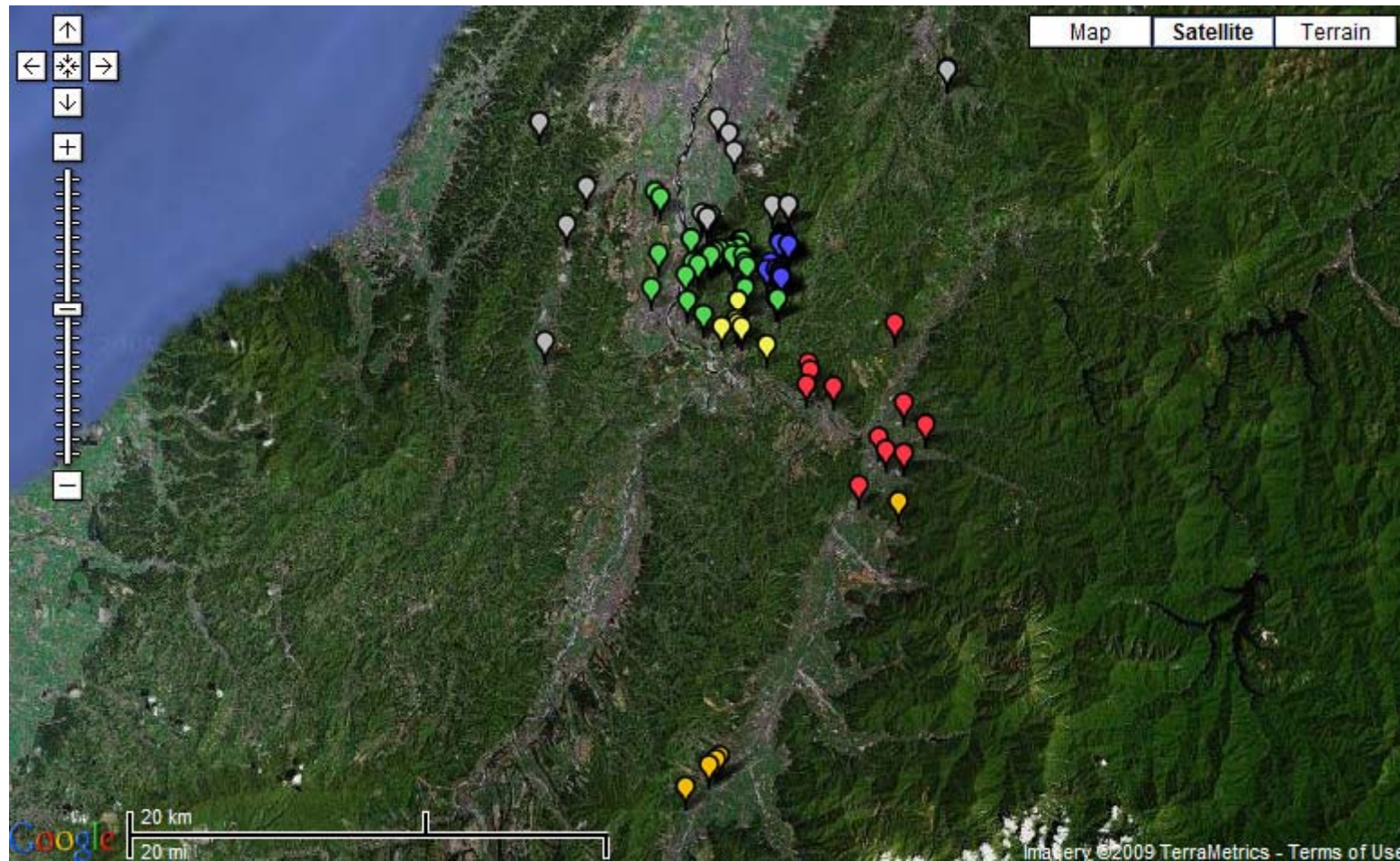
- Niigata Prefecture is situated around 250KM north of Tokyo
- It's landscape is a mixture of mountains and flat lands
- It is home to the longest river in Japan, the Shinano
- It has a farming heritage



The origins of Nishikigoi in Niigata



The origins of Nishikigoi in Niigata



The origins of Nishikigoi in Niigata

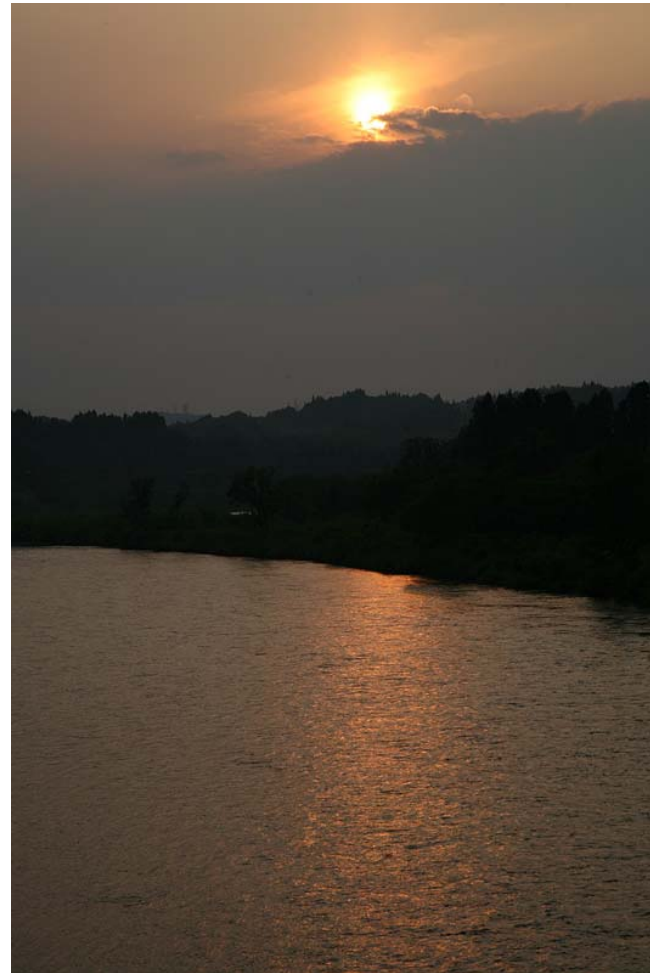
- In the 1700 and 1800's Yamakoshi was a poor farming area
- Main production was rice and cotton
- It was an area so remote it was even ignored for taxation purposes
- It is said in 1781 that the first breeding of Koi took place in Yamakoshi



Reconstruction of peasant farmers house from late 1800's

The origins of Nishikigoi in Niigata

- Uonuma is a town situated on the Uono River
- It is around 30km from Yamakoshi
- In autumn it used to be a busy salmon fishing town
- It is also home to the Asagi Magoi



The origins of Nishikigoji in Niigata

- Yamakoshi is an area of heavy snowfall
- In the past 1 or 2m snowfall in one night were not unknown
- The area was completely isolated for several months
- The villagers started to keep Koi as a protein source



4th January 2008

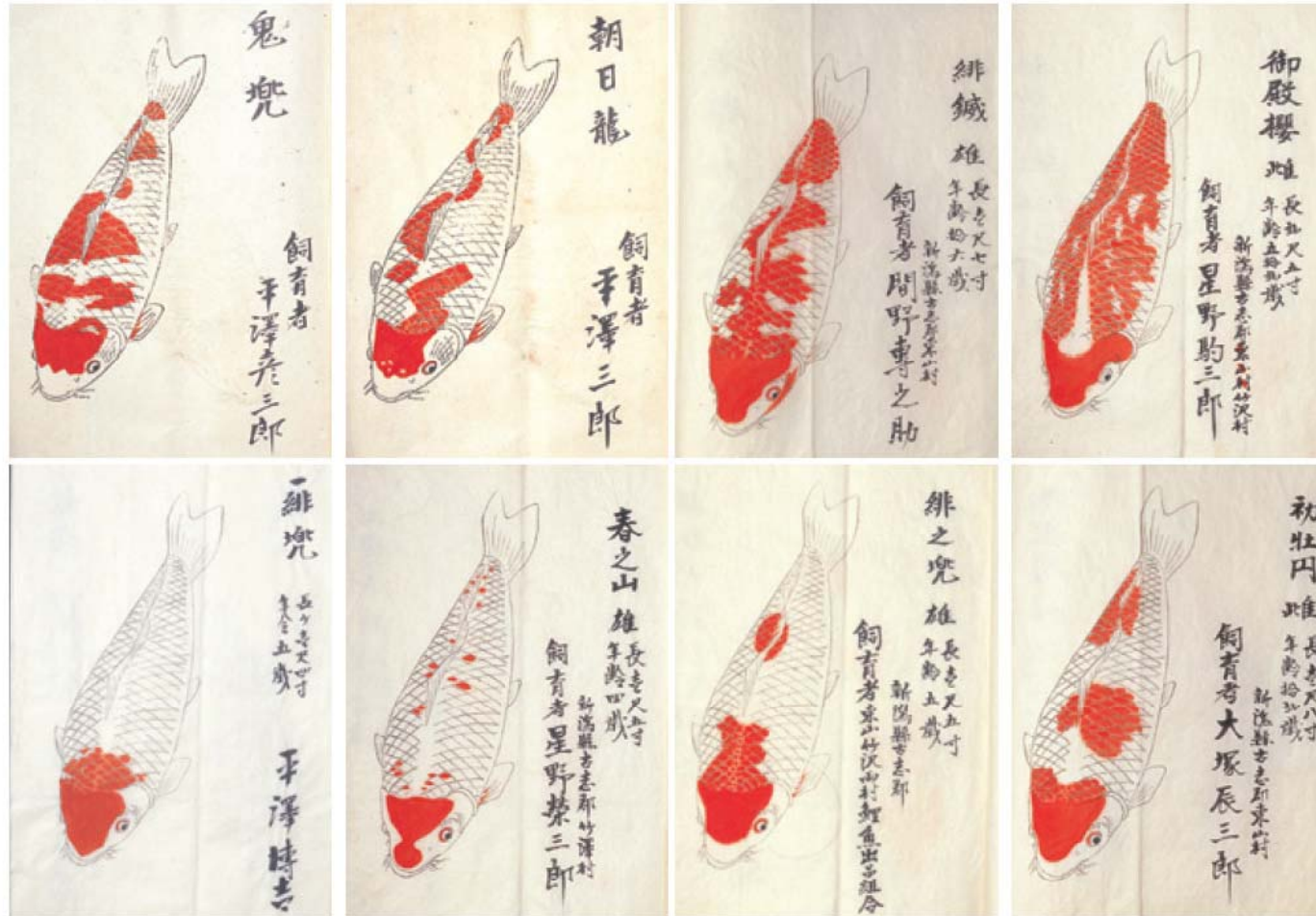
The origins of Nishikigoi in Niigata

- Colour mutations started to appear amongst the Koi kept in Yamakoshi
- Most were shades of red, yellow or white
- Some villagers kept these as 'pets' and started to breed them together
- Benigo and Shirogoi specifically were interbred
- Eventually they produced Sarasa, white Koi with red patterns, the predecessor to Kohaku

Development of the Nishikigoi Industry

- Industry was still small and very local to Niigata
- Niigata authorities banned the industry as being reckless
- The breeders joined together to campaign to be allowed to continue
- In 1914 23 'Kawarigoi' were displayed at the Taisho Expo

Development of the Nishikigoi Industry



Nishikigoi displayed at the 1914 Taisho Expo

Development of the Nishikigoi Industry

- After the Taisho Expo the industry boomed
- Koi were shipped all over Japan
- Koi were acclaimed by the US representatives at the Kyoto Expo in 1924
- 1925, 108 30cm Koi shipped to the USA



Development of the Nishikigoi Industry

- Many new varieties started to appear such as Bekko, Ki Utsuri, Showa, Sanke, Shiro Utsuri
- Torazo sketch book provides examples of what Koi looked like
- The Pacific war brought the industry to a halt in 1941

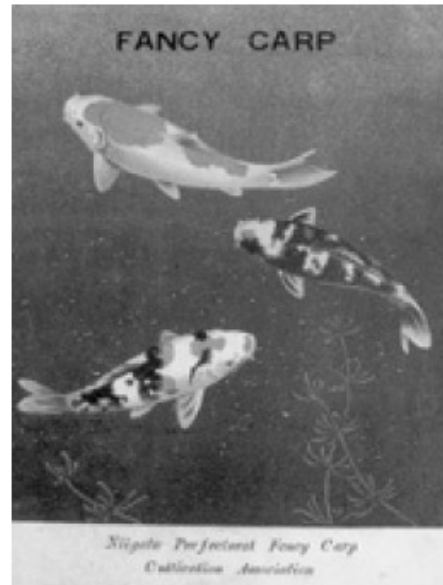


Development of the Nishikigoi Industry



Development of the Nishikigoi Industry

- Industry restarted after the war encouraged by occupying allied alliance
- During the 1950's many farmers turned from rice farming to Koi as it was more lucrative



池養飼鯉花産特志古山

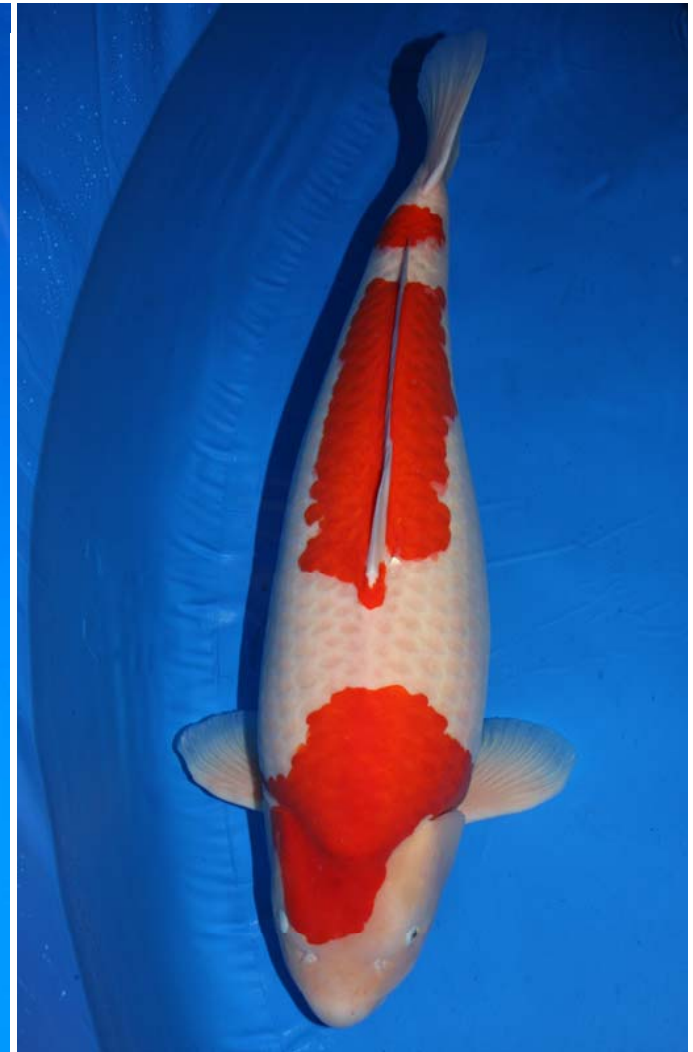
Development of the Nishikigoi Industry

Key dates for the stabilisation of some of the major varieties:

- 1927 - Showa
- 1938 – Shiro Utsuri
- 1953 – Kumonryu
- 1956 – Orenji Ogon
- 1957 – Yamabuki Ogon
- 1958 – Doitsu Ogon
- 1959 – Ki Utsuri
- 1959 – Doitsu Showa
- 1960 - Matsuba Ogon
- 1960 – Midorigoi
- 1960 – Hariwake Ogon
- 1961 – Kujaku
- 1963 – Platinum Ogon
- 1965 – Yamatonishiki

Every main variety of Nishikigoi that exists has been created in Niigata.

Development of the Nishikigoi Industry



Development of the Nishikigoi Industry

2009 Malaysia
Koi Show

Grand Champion

Congratulations

David and Kelvin



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata

22nd March 2008



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata



21st Feb 2008

Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata

7th April 2008



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata

4th August 2008



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata

19th November 2008



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata



Nishikigoji Seasons in Niigata - Spring

- In April the snow starts to melt filling the mud ponds
- Breeders make final selections of tategoi tosai – jumbo tosai will be over 35cm now
- An ideal time to purchase breeders tateshita



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata - Spring

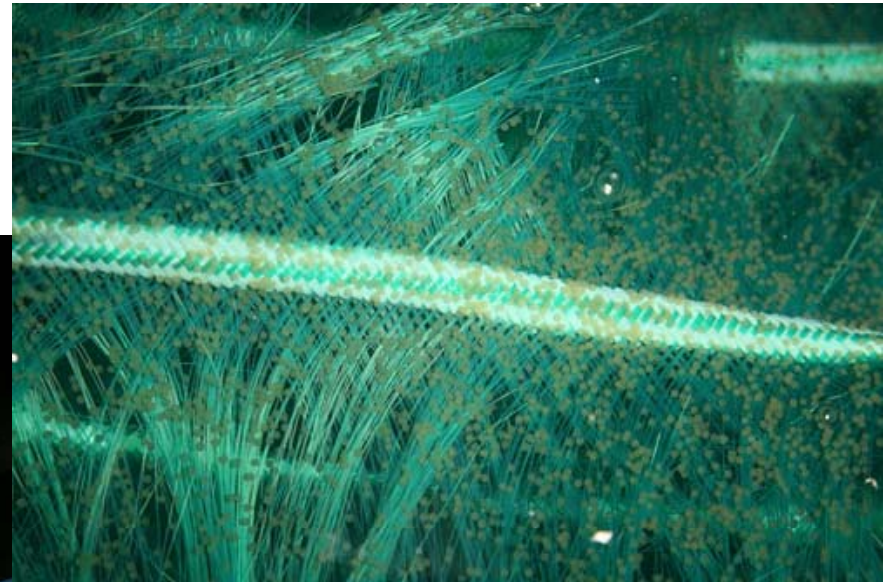
- 2 year and older Koi will be released to the mud ponds at the beginning of May
- In May most breeders will also start breeding
- Spawning is artificial or natural



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata – Spring into Summer



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata – Spring into Summer



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata - Summer

- Spawning will continue into June for most breeders
- This is the busiest time for breeders
- Koi in the mud ponds need to be checked and fed daily
- Culling of the newly hatched fry is the main task

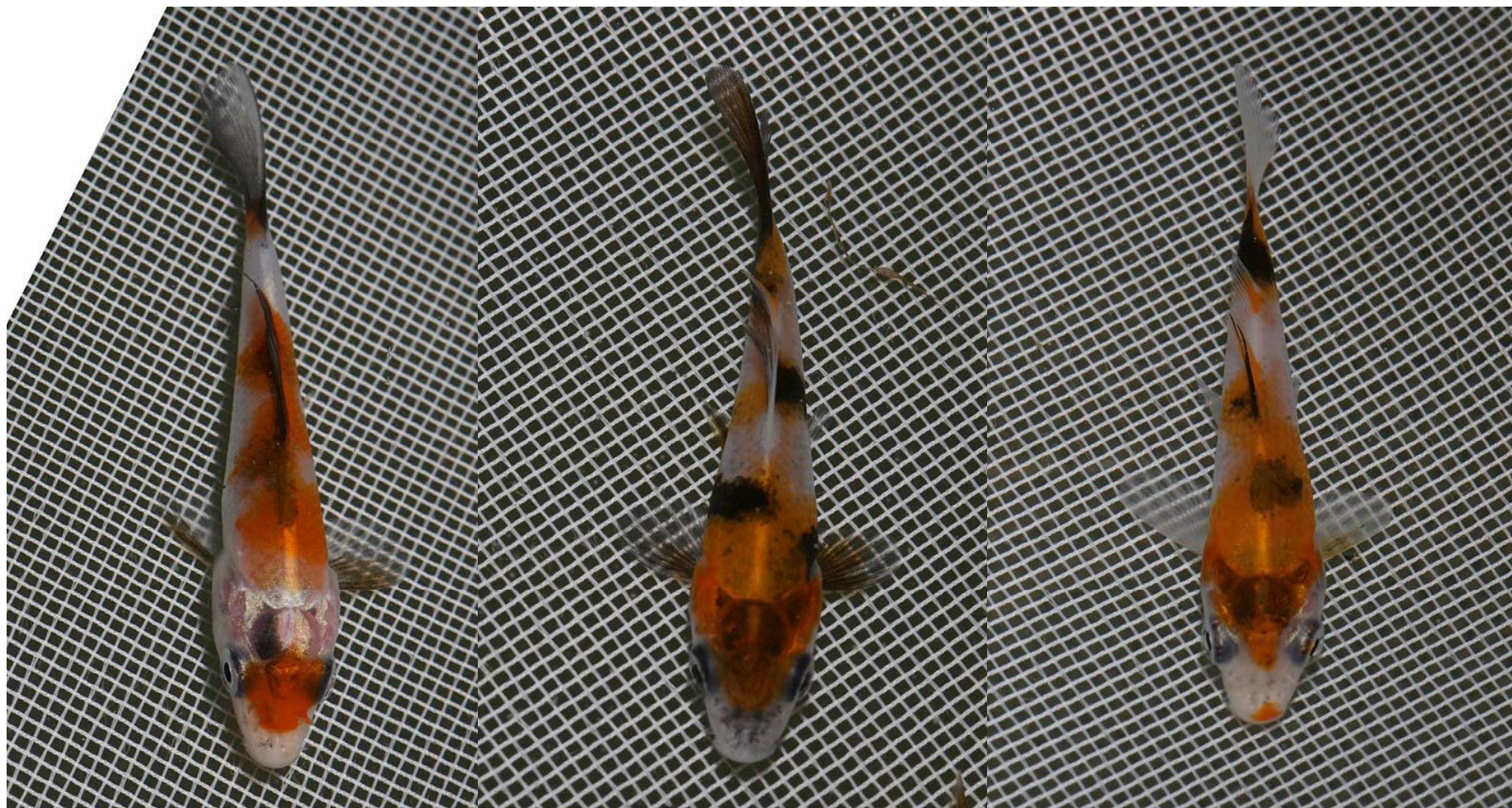
Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata - Summer



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata - Summer



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata - Summer



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata - Autumn

- Tosai will have reached around 20cm by September when they are harvested
- A tosai show is held in Niigata in early September
- Once harvested they are placed in heated concrete ponds to over winter



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata - Autumn



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata - Autumn

- Through October and into November larger Koi are harvested
- This is first time breeders have seen Koi properly in several months
- Very important time for breeders as busiest time for sales
- Generally also the best time for hobbyists to visit

Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata - Autumn



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata - Autumn



Niigata Nishikigoi Seasons - Autumn



Niigata Nishikigoji Seasons - Autumn



Niigata Nishikigoji Seasons - Autumn



Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata - Winter

- By the end of November the autumn rush is over
- Most mud ponds are empty of Koi
- Most visitors have been and gone
- Snow will start to fall in the mountains

Nishikigoi Seasons in Niigata - Winter

- This is a quite time for the breeders
- Indoor ponds require daily maintenance
- Nisai and older Koi receive no food
- Tosai are fed several times per day
- Tosai are also regularly culled



Breeder Profiles

- Whatever variety of Koi you want, of whatever grade, it can be found somewhere in Niigata
- There are around 200 Nishikigoï breeders in Niigata, some household names, some just part time breeders
- All breeders are small family run operations
- When you buy a Koi from Niigata it has been produced by a person, not a company

Breeder Profiles - Dainichi

- Maybe most famous breeder in Niigata
- Founded by Minoru Mano in the 1950's
- Established famous bloodlines for Kohaku, Sanke and Showa
- Winner of Grand Champion at the All Japan Show 4 times



Breeder Profiles - Dainichi

- 5 ZNA All Japan GC's
- Only breeder to win GC with all 3 Gosanke varieties
- Still only breed Gosanke with as many as 40 females used
- All over Japan Dainichi bloodline Koi are used as Oyagoi



Ferrari

Sayuri



Breeder Profiles - Dainichi

- Many famous breeders are apprentices of Dainichi Koi Farm including, Hisashi Hirasawa (Marudo), Hisato Nogami (Nogami), Futoshi Maruyama (Maruyama), Takayoshi Omosako (Omosako Koi Farm) as well as Minoru Mano's sons Futoshi and Shigeru who now run the farm



Breeder Profiles - Torazo

- Brand name of Urakawa Koi Farm
- Founded by Chuzo Kawakami in 1917
- Now run by his great grandson Tsuyoshi Kawakami
- Hiroshi Kawakami established the Torazo Sanke bloodline which helped define modern Sanke



Breeder Profiles - Torazo

- Extremely successful at raising jumbo Koi
- Won Niigata Nogyosai in 2007
- Recently won several Kokugyo awards at All Japan Show
- Now mainly Kohaku breeder, also Sanke and Showa



Breeder Profiles - Torazo

- Always high quality Koi on display
- Director of INPC



Breeder Profiles - Torazo



Breeder Profiles – Isa Koi Farm

- Founded by Hajime Isa in 1970
- Main production Showa, also some Sanke and Kohaku
- One of the first breeders to produce high quality jumbo Showa
- Female oyagoi of 1m



Breeder Profiles – Isa Koi Farm

- Originally produced from Dainichi lines
- Winner of a number of Kokugyo awards
- Winner of Adult Champion at 2009 Wakagoi Show
- Much of the day to day running now done by Mitsunori Isa



Breeder Profiles – Isa Koi Farm

- Well worth a visit by anyone looking for quality Showa
- Chairman of INPC



Breeder Profiles - Marudo

- Founded, and run, by Hisashi Hirasawa
- Hisashi-san trained for 18 years at Dainichi, he was 3rd member of staff
- One of the larger farms in Niigata
- Main production Gosanke



Breeder Profiles - Marudo

- Also produces jumbo Chagoi, Karashigoï and Ogon, and also some Kujaku, Matsuba and Asagi
- Family run operation with wife, brother, son, daughter and daughter in law, all taking an active role on the farm



Breeder Profiles - Marudo

- Previous winner of ZNA All Japan GC, Nogyosai GC and many Kokugyo awards
- A must see for anyone visiting Niigata
- My personal number 1 breeder last autumn



Visiting Niigata

- Easily reached from Tokyo in just 1hr 45mins
- Dozens of breeders within kilometres of one another
- Many hotels and restaurants in main 2 cities, Ojiya and Nagaoka
- As well as the Koi there are many other things to see and do
- Many dealers can take you there, if not contact us and we can assist

2010 All Japan Koi Show

- 2010 All Japan Koi Show is in Niigata City
- 6-8th February 2010
- Niigata City is just 60km from the main Koi producing areas of Niigata



Questions



Contacts/references

- INPC – www.japan-nishikigoi.org
- Nishikigoi Mondo
- A copy of slides will be available from the above site in a couple of days

Thanks and congratulations

- Thank you for listening
- Thank you to the Malaysian Koi Society for inviting us and giving us the opportunity to give this presentation
- Congratulations to the Society for an excellent show and to all the exhibitors who made it possible