

SHIBUKAWA CURRENT

Shibukawa International Association

379th edition, May 2024



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Hello Everyone!

May in Japan is a month of fresh, green foliage and splendid weather, with bright and clear days called "Satsukibare", before the setting-in of the rainy season in June.

May 3 is Constitution Day, May 4 is Greenery Day, and May 5 is Children's Day. These consecutive public holidays in May are known as Golden Week, and are a popular time for Japanese to travel domestically and abroad. Children's Day was formerly called "Tango no Sekku", a day to celebrate the growth of boys. Today, Children's Day is a day to celebrate the growth of both boys and girls. Even now families with boys raise Koi-nobori (carp-shaped streamers). This originated from a Chinese legend of strong carps that could fight their way up to the Yellow River to become dragons. Toward Boy's Day, ornaments such as Gogatsu Ningyo (warrior dolls) and Kabuto (warriors' helmets) are displayed at home, in the hope that the boys will grow as strong and healthy as warriors. Kashiwa-mochi and Chimaki are the traditional Japanese sweets are eaten on the day.

Mother's Day in Japan falls on the second Sunday of May (this year, it falls on Sunday, May 12).

May is the season for newly harvested tea. People especially prize green tea made from new tea leaves picked around Hachijuhachiya (the eighty-eighth day after Risshun, beginning of Spring). These are called "Ichiban-cha", first tea leaves and they have a wonderful flavor and fragrance.

Azalea in Nagamine Park (ながみね こうえん (長峰公園のツツジ))

Nagamine Nature Park is located along the Prefectural Road Shibukawa-Matsuida Line connecting Ikaho Onsen, hot spring town and Lake Haruna, close to Tokutomi Roka Memorial Museum. The park, covering approximately 5 hectares, offers great views of the Ikaho Onsen, Mount Akagi, and of the Kanto Plain.

In the first half of May, about 12000 beautiful Mountain Azaleas growing in the park are in full bloom, creating a blaze of color in the park. There is an observation deck at 834 meters above sea level, that overlooks the park and visitors can enjoy the elegant contrast of red flowers and new green leaves of spring, against the backdrop of Mt. Akagi and the buildings of the hot spring town. With many Manyo Kahi (monument inscribed with a poem), this park lends itself to recreation.

Peak season: from early May to mid-May



Hime-gifucho (ヒメギフチョウ)



Hime-gifucho (*Luehdorfia Puziloi*) is a butterfly of the swallowtail butterflies family, Papilionidae, found only in Japan. With black and yellow stripes on the entire wing and a purple band on the rear wing, this lovely creature adds to the color, joy and fascination of nature.

Designated as a prefectural natural monument, Hime-gifucho is also known as the Spring Goddess or the Akagi Hime (the Princess of Akagi). In April and May, butterflies are plentiful around Mt. Akagi.

The 20th Clear Stream Festival (第20回清流祭り)

The Festival will be held at Nakago Asada, Tone-gawa riverside on Sunday, May 19, from 10:00 am to 2:30 pm, offering various activities such as: young yamame (troutlet) stocking river; fishing tournament (20 elementary school students on a first come first served basis, application from 9:00 am); Taisho-koto (Japanese zither) performance; learning about Gunma nature, river and fish quizzes; fishing and tsukamidori (grabbing with bare hands), for high school students and younger; masuyaki (grilled trout); river protection activities (all participants picking up driftwood and trash); panel displays and other exhibits. (The program may be subject to change.) Parking is limited, so please carpool, or avoid coming by car, if possible. In case of bad weather, such as heavy rainfall either the day before or on the day of the Festival, the venue cannot be used, and the festival will be canceled.

Tel: 0279-22-2527 (Doboku, Civil Engineering Division)

Kamishibai Course in Shibukawa (紙芝居講座 in 渋川)

Join this course and discover the art of Kamishibai, the traditional form of Japanese picture-storytelling! The course will be held at Shibukawa Chuo Kominkan (4th Floor Lecture hall) on Sunday, June 16, from 10:00 am to 15:00 pm (doors open at 9:30 am). The mural artist, Kamishibai writer Eiko Matsui will teach about the wonderful world of picture-story show and the secret behind their charm.

Limit: 100 people on a first-come, first-served basis.

Participation fee: General 2000 yen, members 1800 yen (morning session: general 1500 yen, members 1200 yen)

Application: By June 2. Please fill in the application form on the back of the flyer that can be find at Chuo Kominkan or online at: <https://www.kamishibai-ikaja.com/documents/seminar/2024-in-shibukawa.pdf>, and send it to Kanou Mikiko (**Address:** 〒: 379-1103, Shibukawa-shi, Akagi-machi, Tsukuda 1650-2 / **Fax: 0279-24-2781** /

E-mail: mikiko.kanou.kawaii@gmail.com). The fee must be paid within a week after submitting the application.

Bamboo Crafts Workshop (竹工芸教室)

The workshop will be held at Hokkitsu Rekishi Shiryoukan on Saturday, June 22 and Sunday, June 23, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. You will learn how to weave bamboo, in a traditional manner, by using bamboo strips, and make your own bamboo item! Please bring a nata (bamboo splitting tool), or a small knife, and your own lunch.

Limit: 7 people (high school students or older and can attend both days).

Fee: 500 yen (for materials)

Application: 9:00 am - 4:30 pm, daily except Mondays and Tuesdays, until Friday June 3 (**Tel: 0279-52-2102**)

Kyudo Course Registration (弓道教室生徒募集)

In this 9-week course students will be familiarized with the equipment (bow, arrow, glove), learn etiquette, and hands-on practice of shooting technique, basic movements and postures of Kyudo (Japanese archery).

When: from May 18 to June 15, every Tuesday and Saturday, from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Where: Miyata Shokai Budokan, Kyudo-jo (Shibukawa Budokan)

Limit: 10 people, on a first come, first served basis (elementary students, grade 5 and older)

Cost: 2,000 yen

Application: By phone, from May 8 to May 14, **Tel: 0279-22-0928** (Kyudo Club) or **0279-22-2241** (Sport Div.)



Chari-Challe Spring 2024 “Akagi Shizen-En” Climb into the Forest

(ちゃりチャレ 2024 春 「赤城自然園」 森までクライム)

Explore the city's landscape by cycling up to Akagi Shizen-En (Nature Park) and immerse yourself in the sights, scents, and sounds of nature! Located at an altitude of 600 meters, Akagi Shizen-En is known for its natural scenic beauty and diversity of flowers and plants, especially in the spring. Invitation tickets are given away, limited to one ticket per person during the event period, to those who rent an electric assisted bicycle "Aji Cycle" and cycle up the hills to reach the Park. E-bike rental is available for free and can be reserved in advance.

When: From Saturday, April 27 to Monday, May 6, 2024

Akagi Shizen-En open hours: 9:00 am - 4:30 pm (entrance to the Park is until 3:30 pm)

Reception: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm on the 1st Floor of the Shibukawa Ekimae Plaza

Application: by phone (Tel: 0279-22-2463), or by email (Email: sia-shibukawa@city.shibukawa.gunma.jp)

Mallet Golf Lessons for Beginners (マレットゴルフ初心者体験講習会)

Shibukawa City Akagi Shikishima Mallet Golf Course offers a series of three lessons for people who live, work or study in Shibukawa city. You will learn the basics of the game in a fun and relaxing environment.

When: 9:00 am to 11:00 am, Thursday, June 6, July 4, and August 1

Where: Akagi Shikishima Mallet Golf Course

Fee: 400 yen each time, collected on the day at the venue (course fee and equipment rental fee)

How to apply: by phone, Tel: 080-5042-6988 (Mr. Tani from the City Sports Association Shibukawa Branch Mallet Golf Club, or directly at the venue. Tel: 0279-22-2241 (Sport Div. for more information)

Vehicle-related Taxes (自動車に関する税金)

Automobile Tax and Light Automobile Tax are due on Wednesday, May 31, 2023. Tax payment notification slips will be sent to all vehicle owners (registered before April 1st), during the beginning of May. Payments can be made at administrative service windows, banks, the post office, or convenience stores. Bank transfers are also possible.

If you have problems with paying your vehicle tax, contact the offices below for inquiries and consultation.

Automobile Tax: Gunma Prefectural Vehicle Tax Office (Gunma-ken Jidoshazei Jimusho) (Tel: 027-263-4343) or at the Shibukawa Administrative Prefectural Tax Office (Tel: 0279-22-4050)

Light Automobile Tax: Your local Village / Town / City Hall.

SOS Free Legal Consultation for Foreign Residents (外国人無料法律相談)

Where: One-Stop Consultation Center for Foreign Residents of Gunma (1st Floor, Showa Chosha Wing, 1-1-1 Ote-machi, Maebashi)

When: Sunday, May 19, 2024, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm (Doors close at 2:30 pm.)

Consultants: Lawyer, Gyoseishoshi (Immigration specialist), and Sharoushi (Labor Consultant)

Interpreters: English, Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese and Nepalese

Reservation & Inquiry: One-Stop Consultation for Foreign Residents of Gunma, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, weekdays (Priority is given to those who have appointments.)

Tel: 027-289-8275

On-duty Clinics in May (5 月 の 休 日 当 番 医)

	Internal Medicine		Surgery	Dentistry
5/3 (Fri)	Ishikita-iin (石北医院) Tel: 22-1378	Itamino-clinic -Hasegawa-iin (痛みのクリニック長谷川医院) Tel: 30-5055	Sekiguchi-byoin (関口病院) Tel: 22-2378	Yamakawa-shika-iin (山川歯科医院) Tel: 22-0260
5/4 (Sat)	Nara-naika-iin (奈良内科医院) Tel: 25-1155	Shinto-wakaba-clinic (榛東わかばクリニック) Tel: 20-5531	Tomaru-clinic (とまるクリニック) Tel: 26-7711	Komayose-shika-clinic (駒寄歯科クリニック) Tel: 30-5500
5/5 (Sun)	Otani-naika-clinic (大谷内科クリニック) Tel: 20-1881	Komayose-kodomo -shinryojo (駒寄こども診療所) Tel: 55-5252	Hokumo-byoin (北毛病院) Tel: 24-1234	Hoshino-shika-clinic (星野歯科クリニック) Tel: 22-0232
5/6 (Mon)	Kawashima-naika-clinic (川島内科クリニック) Tel: 23-2001	Sato-iin (佐藤医院) Tel: 52-3003	Ino-seikei-geka-rihabiri-naika (井野整形外科リハビリ内科) Tel: 30-5255	Sakura-shika (さくら歯科) Tel: 30-6333
5/12 (Sun)	Iguchi-iin (井口医院) Tel: 25-1100	Miyukida-naika-iin (みゆきだ内科医院) Tel: 60-6070	Takano-geka-ichoka-iin (高野外科胃腸科医院) Tel: 24-2454	Takizawa-shika-iin (たきざわ歯科医院) Tel: 55-6480
5/19 (Sun)	Shibukawa-chuo-byoin (渋川中央病院) Tel: 25-1711	Harasawa-iin (原沢医院) Tel: 72-2503	Adachi-seikei-geka (あだち整形外科) Tel: 30-1170	Kobuna-shika-iin (こぶな歯科医院) Tel: 22-4939
5/26 (Sun)	Kamiyama-naika-iin (神山内科医院) Tel: 22-2181	Sato-iin (佐藤医院) Tel: 54-2756	Shibukawa-iryō-center (渋川医療センター) Tel: 23-1010	Esu-shika-iin (エース歯科医院) Tel: 55-1181

Night Emergency Clinic (夜 間 急 患 診 療 所)

The clinic provides medical services daily, from 7:00 am to 10:00 pm, in cases of sudden illnesses or injuries.

Patients will be introduced to another medical institution if specialized treatment is necessary.

Tel: 0279-23-8899 (Address: 1760-1 Nagatsuka-cho, Shibukawa)

To access the **SHIBUKAWA CURRENT** online, scan the code on the right or visit our website at:
<https://www.city.shibukawa.lg.jp/kurashi/community/kokusaikouryukyukai/p000024.html>



Free Counselling Service (外 国 人 生 活 相 談 窓 口 の 案 内)

The Shibukawa International Association is providing a free counselling service for foreign residents at Shibukawa City Hall every Thursday, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. **(Tel: 0279-22-2463)**



Information (お 問 い 合 わ せ)

Shibukawa City Office Shimin Kyodo Suishin Ka, 80 Ishihara, Shibukawa City

Tel: 0279-22-2463 Fax: 0279-24-6541 Email: sia-shibukawa@city.shibukawa.gunma.jp

URL: <http://www.city.shibukawa.lg.jp/kurashi/community/kokusaikouryukyukai/p001414.html>