

New orchid species found in Japan

23rd March 2023



Photograph: Masayuki Ishibashi/Kobe University

Nature is full of secrets. There are still many things to find out about it. One of those things was discovered last week in Japan. It is rare to find a new plant in Japan. Its trees, flowers and other flora are well documented. However, an amateur naturalist came across a new species of orchid in

Tokyo. Scientists studied the flower and believe it grows in parks and gardens across Japan. The newly-found orchid is beautiful. It is pink and white, and its delicate petals look like they are made from glass. Professor Kenji Suetsugu from Kobe University said: "The discovery of new species in common places means it is necessary to keep exploring, even in everyday places that don't look so remarkable."

There are about 28,000 orchid species worldwide. The new orchid belongs to a class called Spiranthes. There are about 50 different kinds of Spiranthes. They are the most common kind of orchid in Japan. They are mentioned in a Japanese poem from the year 759. Professor Suetsugu said he and his colleagues were "thrilled to have identified a new species". He said it was exciting because it wasn't found hidden deep in a rainforest or jungle. The discovery of the new orchid is good news. However, many orchids are on the endangered species list. This is because of habitat loss. We need to protect natural environments to stop flowers disappearing. If we lose more orchids, the world will be less colourful.

Sources: [cnn.com](https://www.cnn.com) / [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com) / [kobe-u.ac.jp](https://www.kobe-u.ac.jp)

Writing

No one should ever cut flowers from where they are growing. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

nature / secrets / last week / Japan / flowers / gardens / orchids / species / discovery / worldwide / poem / professor / colleague / thrilled / rainforest / good news / natural

True / False

- 1) The article says there are very few secrets left in nature. T / F
- 2) It isn't so rare to find new plants in Japan. T / F
- 3) The newly-discovered orchid grows in parks across Japan. T / F
- 4) A professor said we need to keep exploring. T / F
- 5) There are around 28,000 species of orchid in the world. T / F
- 6) An orchid was mentioned in a Japanese poem in 1759. T / F
- 7) A professor was happy the orchid wasn't found deep in the jungle. T / F
- 8) Orchids are becoming endangered because of habitat loss. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. secrets | a. unusual |
| 2. discovered | b. natural environment |
| 3. rare | c. amazing |
| 4. fragile | d. co-workers |
| 5. remarkable | e. mysteries |
| 6. worldwide | f. safeguard |
| 7. colleagues | g. easily broken |
| 8. hidden | h. globally |
| 9. habitat | i. found |
| 10. protect | j. concealed |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) How interested are you in nature?
- c) Would you like to study flowers and plants?
- d) What are the most common flowers in your country?
- e) What do you think of your country's national flower?
- f) Are weeds flowers?
- g) How can we protect flowers more?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the scientists?

Phrase Match

1. Nature is full
 2. It is rare to
 3. its delicate
 4. they are made
 5. everyday places that don't look
 6. They are mentioned in a Japanese
 7. many orchids are on the endangered
 8. habitat
 9. We need to protect natural
 10. the world will be less
- a. species list
 - b. petals
 - c. colourful
 - d. so remarkable
 - e. loss
 - f. environments
 - g. of secrets
 - h. from glass
 - i. find a new plant
 - j. poem

Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think of nature's secrets?
- b) Do you want to know all of nature's secrets?
- c) What nature is there around you?
- d) What do you know about orchids?
- e) What's your favourite flower?
- f) Is it OK to pick or cut flowers from where they grow?
- g) What do you think of buying people flowers?
- h) Should we keep exploring?

Spelling

1. Nature is full of tsecesr
2. an truemaa naturalist
3. its eacliedt petals
4. The ervdsoyc of new species
5. it is ssaecreny to keep exploring
6. places that don't look so klabreamer
7. They are the most oncomm kind
8. They are odntmenie in a Japanese poem
9. he and his loseaeclug
10. dtiifield a new species
11. the dgenndaere species list
12. We need to tcroep natural environments

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. i	3. a	4. g	5. c
6. h	7. d	8. j	9. b	10. f

Role Play

Role A – Orchids

You think orchids are the best flowers. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their flowers. Also, tell the others which are the worst of these (and why): dandelions, roses or lotus flowers.

Role B – Dandelions

You think dandelions are the best flowers. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their flowers. Also, tell the others which are the worst of these (and why): orchids, roses or lotus flowers.

Role C – Roses

You think roses are the best flowers. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their flowers. Also, tell the others which are the worst of these (and why): dandelions, orchids or lotus flowers.

Role D – Lotus Flowers

You think lotus flowers are the best flowers. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their flowers. Also, tell the others which are the worst of these (and why): dandelions, roses or orchids.

Speaking – Flowers

Rank these with your partner. Put the best flowers at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Orchids
- Lotus
- Roses
- Lavender
- Dandelions
- Buttercup
- Tulips
- Daisy

Answers – True False

1	F	2	F	3	T	4	T	5	T	6	F	7	T	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.