



Hiroshima Visit, November 2022

In early November GLH had the pleasure to host plant scientists and botanic garden experts from renowned institutions in the United States, who visited Hiroshima to observe and study the *Hibakujumoku* firsthand. The delegation included Ari Novy from the San Diego Botanic Garden (and a member of GLH Committee), Todd Michael and Wolfgang Busch from the Salk Institute for Biological Studies, Nicole Cavender from the Huntington Botanical Gardens, and Philip Douglas from the Denver Botanic Gardens.

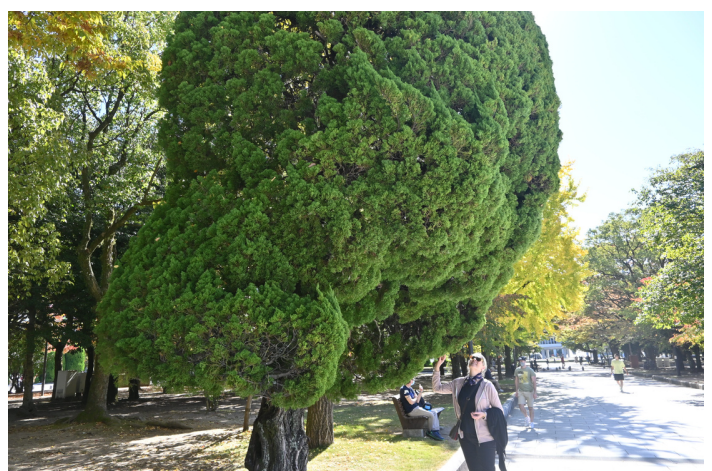
The scientists visited various *Hibakujumoku*, including those around Hiroshima Castle and Shukkeien. This was also an opportunity for the scientists to discuss the trees with Chikara Horiguchi, the tree doctor who has cared for them for more than thirty years. In addition, the delegation also paid courtesy visits to the mayor of Hiroshima city and the vice governor of Hiroshima prefecture to advance the importance of the A-Bomb trees as well as botanical gardens. Bonds between botanists in Hiroshima and the United States was also forged when the scientists visited the Hiroshima Botanical Garden, met the current and past directors along with other staff partnering with GLH.

The group also partook in seed picking, a tradition that allows GLH to preserve and grow second-generation *Hibakujumoku* around the world. The visit ended with a short trip to Miyajima, the magical island covered by virgin forest as well as shrines and temples. The scientists' visit was brief but fruitful, and hopefully only the first step in a long and productive cooperation.

The visit started on Sunday November 6, with a stop by Atago-ike on Peace Boulevard, a unique spot where a number of *Hibakujumoku* survived. It was the scientists' first encounter with the trees.



Next stop was the Peace Memorial Park and Museum. The scientists spent hours enveloped in the green space, and contemplating on the A-Bomb related displays at the museum.



On Monday morning, the scientists deposited a wreath at The Cenotaph for the Victims of the Atomic Bomb.



Afterwards, the scientists met GLH tree doctor Chikara Horguchi and visited more *Hibakujumoku* around Hiroshima Castle with his guidance and commentary.



Monday followed with visits to Hiroshima city mayor Kazumi Matsui and Hiroshima prefecture vice governor Yuko Tamai.



Thereafter Ms. Sadae Kasaoka, a hibakusha, gave a moving testimony about her experiences as a child and young woman, surviving the Bomb and its aftermath... (with gratitude for their support to our loyal friend Tomoko Watanabe and outstanding interpreter Naoko Koizumi).



Tuesday started with a visit to the Hiroshima Botanical Garden where the peers were able to ask their questions about (and love for) the plant collections with key GLH partners.



Next was an excursion to Shukkeien, with a special stop at the famous mother-tree, the ginkgo believed to be one of the oldest *Hibakujumoku* in the city of Hiroshima.



The group headed back to a *Hibakujumoku* Kurogane Holly at Hiroshima Castle to partake in a special activity for GLH (and botanists the world over): seed picking!



The trip ended with a short visit to Miyajima, a sacred island and host to Itsukushima Shrine, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, about 45 minutes away from Hiroshima and famed for its floating shrine, its temples nestled in the mountains and its expansive virgin forests.

