

Local Plants: *Tsukushihagi* (Bush Clover; *Lespedeza homoloba*)

This deciduous (seasonally shedding) shrub in the bush clover family grows on the edges of woodlands, along roads, and around low mountains, to a height of 1.5 to 3 meters. Its compound leaves grow in groups of three, and are oval in shape with tips that are either rounded or slightly indented. The leaves are smooth on the front, with short hairs on the reverse side. In August to October, light red to purple flowers that resemble sweet-pea flowers bloom beside the leaves: the heads of these flowers are longer than the leaves, and this is one of the *tsukushihagi*'s distinguishing features. The fruit is flat and round at first, gradually ripening into an oval-shaped bean.