

## **Park Highlights**

The lush Japanese garden at Hamamatsu Castle Park is located at the base of the castle keep and was designed to incorporate the existing trees in the area. No pesticides or herbicides are used in the garden, and wildlife such as squirrels and kingfishers have taken up residence there.

The garden showcases the beauty of the passing seasons in miniature. Springtime is when the numerous cherry trees start to bloom, and different varieties can be found throughout the garden, such as weeping cherry (*shidare zakura*), whose blossoms hang delicately over the ponds, and wild cherry (*yama zakura*), whose blossoms give way to brightly colored cherries. In summer, the fresh leaves of the maple trees are a shade of deep green, contrasting sharply with the bright purple of hydrangeas and the vibrant yellow of flowering St. John's wort. In autumn, these maple leaves turn a rich, golden red. In winter, the delicate yellow flowers of native witch-hazel appear, and look most striking when snowfall has coated the trees in white.

Central to the garden are three waterfalls that cascade into three separate ponds. The stone used for these, as well as for the centerpieces of the ponds, is the same type of stone used in the construction of the castle. Wooden seating is available above the waterfalls for enjoying the surroundings while listening to the sound of flowing water.