

## Introduction to Kamo Garden

Kamo Garden is a garden park and plant nursery with a long history, located in the thickly forested mountains east of Hamamatsu. The full name of the garden translates roughly as “flower and bird gardens of the Kamo family estate,” and the Kamo family has been in residence in the area for over sixteen generations.

The main attraction is the large Japanese iris garden at the center of the park, and the busiest season is from May through June when the iris garden is in full bloom. The gardens also feature a lotus pond and hydrangea bushes in various colors. Another popular activity is birdwatching, as ducks and parakeets can often be spotted around the park.

Kamo Garden is also known for its buildings that date back hundreds of years, and which have been preserved in their original condition. These buildings were the inspiration for several Japanese anime series, including the popular 2012 high school drama *Hyouka*.

Activities include touring the old estate buildings, viewing new flower varieties being developed in the nurseries, and barbequing. Both the gardens and greenhouse have dining facilities where a selection of traditional desserts and snacks are served, such as rice wrapped in bamboo leaves (*chimaki*). The gardens and buildings are open year-round, and admission varies from ¥1,000 to ¥1,500 depending on the time of year, with discounts for seniors. Children elementary-school-age and younger are allowed entry for free.