

## **Nishikigoi no Sato (Nishikigoi Village)**

Learn about the history and the life cycle of koi, from small fry to large meter-long adults, at Nishikigoi no Sato (Nishikigoi Village), in central Ojiya. Exhibits detail the black carp's evolution into the colorful *nishikigoi* so sought-after today. Visitors can see hundreds of healthy carp in aquariums, viewing pools, and Japanese garden ponds where koi swim along channels and under bridges. Stroll the traditional gardens to observe the colorful koi up close and even feed these "living jewels."

### *Discover and learn*

In Nishikigoi no Sato's main viewing hall, visitors can learn about the many varieties of *nishikigoi*, including the traditional types—white with splotches of red, orange, and black—as well as the more recently bred gold and platinum varieties.

Displays depict the history of koi and the genetic mutation that led to the emergence of these colorful varieties from black carp. Multilingual panels and photos illustrate how the koi are raised, and explain their significance in Japanese culture. A video with English narration about the koi life cycle, breeding, and the world of koi hobbyists, is available to watch upon request in the viewing area.

### *Observe and interact*

An indoor viewing pool houses around 100–350 large adult koi, which can be observed from all angles. Young fry swim in small fish tanks surrounding the pool. Outside the building, koi swim gracefully in ponds and along channels in a Japanese garden featuring seasonal flora, miniature waterfalls, and traditional bridges. Visitors may purchase food for feeding the fish in the garden ponds. From late November to March, the koi are brought indoors to protect them from the cold. About 20 different varieties are kept on the premises.

### *Nishikigoi ownership system*

Many of the 300 or so koi kept at Nishikigoi no Sato have private owners. At the entrance of Nishikigoi no Sato there are rows of photos of *nishikigoi* with the names of their owners written next to them.