

A Historical Walk Around Kyoto

-Another spring color; *Yamabuki* (golden yellow of Japanese rose bush)-



Yamabuki blooming along the Ichinoi River in Matsuo Taisha Shrine.



Elegant flowering is very rose family.

Spring is the season for admiring cherry blossoms. People tend to check the blooming state on the reports updated day by day, and view cherry blossoms turning pink when going out. There is another flowers beautifully add color on Kyoto in spring. It is *Yamabuki*- Japanese Kerria (also known as Japanese rose bush).

Yamabuki start blooming at the timing as they replace after cherry blossoms last. They turn bright golden yellow and their peak bloom is around the middle of April. In Kyoto city, *Yamabuki* can be seen along the Shirakawa River in Gion, the Mitarashi-gawa River in Shimogamo-Jinja Shrine, etc. The “*Yamabuki* festival” of Matsuo-Taisha Shrine is also well-known which is held annually in the best season of *Yamabuki*. Both sides of Ichinoi River in the shrine are covered with about 3,000 *Yamabuki*. *Yamabuki* are befitting the traditional Japanese garden facilities such as stone bridges and water mills. The harmony of this beautiful scenery attracts people.

Yamabuki are plants of the rose family. They have a legend that “The gold coins dropped to a valley transformed into the flowers of *Yamabuki*”. *Yamabuki* bloom as overlapping many golden yellow flowers on the supple slender drooping branches. Because of the legend and the appearance of the flowers, the meaning of *Yamabuki* in the language of flowers is “Luck with money” or “Elegance”.

In Japan, *Yamabuki* have been familiar for long time. Going back to the ancient times, they already appeared in Manyoshu –the oldest Japanese anthology of short poems covering the end of the 7th to 8th century. The golden yellow of *Yamabuki* is used the name of the color as *Yamabuki-Iro* (Iro means a color), which is one of the Japanese traditional colors. Most of the people might feel the end of spring after cherry blossoms finish falling. This year, how about enjoying another color of spring in Kyoto after that?

