<u>Reader Collection</u> > <u>Exhibitions</u> > EYECATCHERS 100 Japanese flower-bird prints

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EYE-CATCHERS

100 Japanese flower-bird prints



Camellia (Comellia japonica) and black bulbul (Hypsipetes leucocephalus) by Jakuchů Itů

Introduction

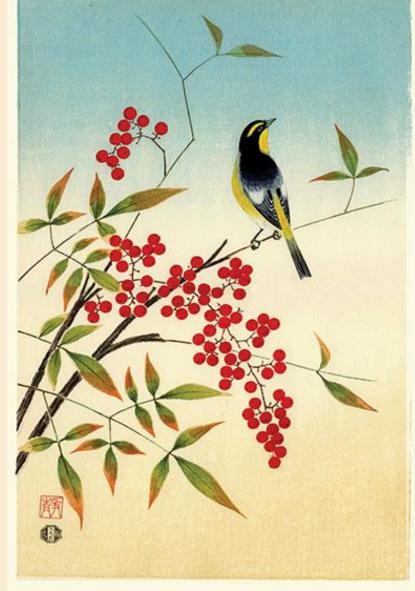
Flowers and birds may catch our eye for a number of reasons. Some are brightly colored which makes them stand out from the background while others may have an unusual shape or size that we have not seen before. Birds both fly and interact and our eyes are naturally attracted to this movement. Printed pictures of flowers and birds which show these colors, shapes, sizes or action are equally appealing. One hundred examples of eye-catching Japanese flower-bird prints, chosen from the Reader Collection of Japanese Art, are included in this virtual exhibition. These prints are grouped by their primary eye-catching feature; namely, **color**, **shape**, **size**, **action** or **unconventional view**.

Color - The human eye and brain react more strongly to some colors than to others. Reds and yellows are perhaps the most eye-catching and, not surprisingly, many Japanese artists have chosen to depict species whose flowers, fruits or feathers are red or yellow. Pictures 1 to 7 provide some examples. Some artists chose to alter the natural color of flowers, fruits, birds or the picture background to create something guite unexpected and, therefore, eye-catching. In pictures 8 to 11 the artist added extra red or yellow to the flowers or birds depicted while in pictures 12 and 13 extra yellow or red was added to the picture background. Reducing or removing color to create contrast can be equally effective. Only blue and white is used in picture 14. In pictures 15 and 16 the artist blackened plant foliage to make other colors stand out while in pictures 17 to 20 the background was blackened for the same reason. Combining black with white can also be very eye-catching as shown in picture 21. Another form of color contrast was created in picture 22 by adding patches of unusual colors to the background of a black-and-white line drawing. In picture 23 color matching rather than color contrast was used to catch the viewer's eye.

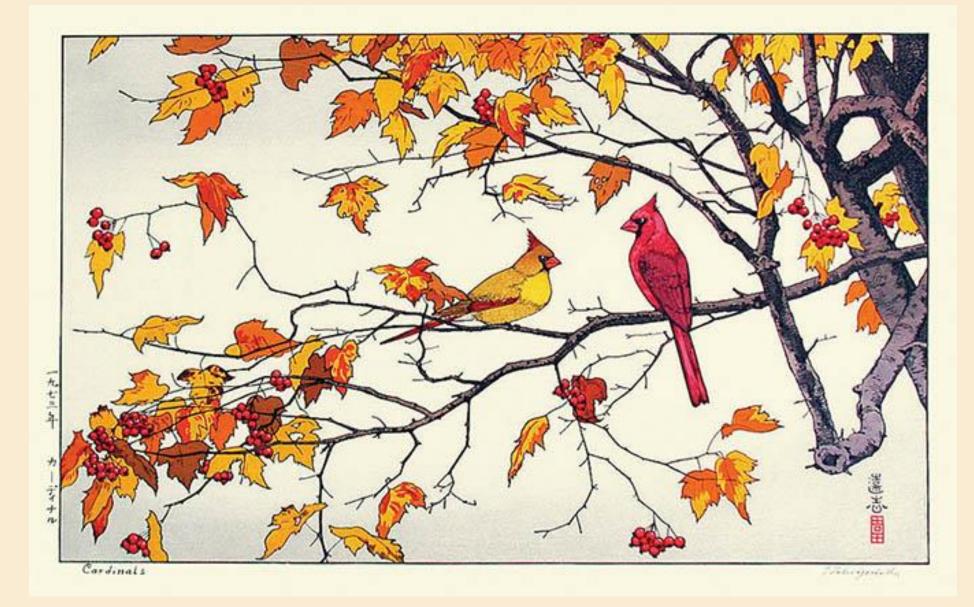
1 Red color - torch azalea (*Rhododendron kaempferi*) and red-flanked bluetail (*Tarsiger cyanurus*) by Shizuo
 Ashikaga, 270 x 400 mm, woodblock

2 Red and yellow colors - heavenly bamboo (*Nandina domestica*) and narcissus flycatcher (*Ficedula narcissina*) by Shizuo Ashikaga, 270 x 400 mm, woodblock





3 Red and yellow colors - highbush cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*) and northern cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) by Toshi Yoshida, 500 x 300 mm, woodblock



4 Red and yellow colors - peach (*Prunus persica*), rape (*Brassica napus*), violet (*Viola* sp.), Chinese milk-vetch (*Astragalus sinicus*) and domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*) by Gyōsan, 225 x 350 mm, woodblock



5 Red and yellow colors - florist's chrysanthemum (*Chrysanthemum grandiflorum*), lespedeza (*Lespedeza* sp.), balloon flower (*Platycodon grandiflorus*), scabious patrinia (*Patrinia scabiosifolia*), eulalia grass (*Miscanthus sinensis*) and red-crowned crane (*Grus japonensis*) by Gyōsan, 225 x 350 mm, woodblock



6 Red color - camellia (*Camellia japonica*) color variant and albino Java sparrow (*Padda oryzivora*) by Koson Ohara, 235 x 360 mm, woodblock **7 Red color** - Japanese laurel (*Aucuba japonica*) and Java sparrow (*Padda oryzivora*) by Koson Ohara, 65 x 90 mm, woodblock





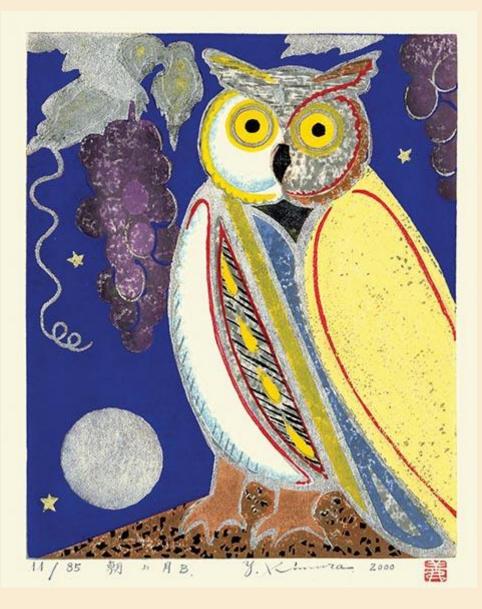
8 Extra red and yellow color - rose-of-sharon (*Hibiscus syriacus*) and Eurasian bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*) by Waichi Hayashi, 330 x 240 mm, woodblock



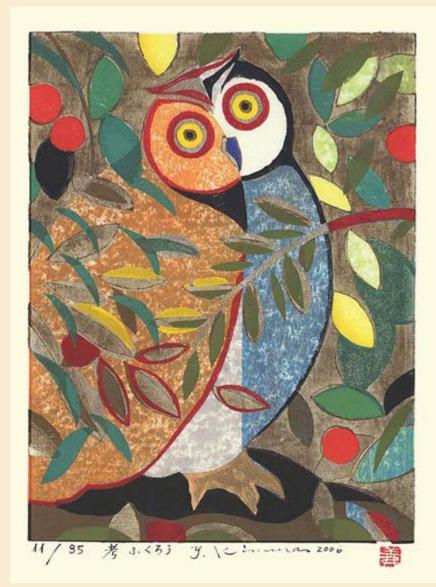
9 Extra red and yellow color - Japanese wisteria (*Wisteria floribunda*) and rock dove (*Columba livia*) by Kyōzō Yamada, 415 x 295 mm, woodblock



10 Extra red and yellow color - grape (*Vitis vinifera*) and scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by Yoshiharu Kimura, 240 x 290 mm, woodblock



11 Extra red and yellow color - cherry (*Prunus* sp.) and scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by Yoshiharu Kimura, 225 x 300 mm, woodblock



12 Background with extra yellow - eulalia grass (*Miscanthus sinensis*) and crow (*Corvus* sp.) by Tsukasa Yoshida, 245 x 380 mm, woodblock

13 Background with extra red - cherry (*Prunus* sp.) and Java sparrow (*Padda oryzivora*) by Kōyō Nakagawa, 240 x 345 mm, woodblock





14 Reduced color - loquat (*Eriobotrya japonica*) and black-naped oriole
(*Oriolus chinesis*) by Hiroshige Utagawa,
170 x 380 mm, woodblock



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15 Blackened foliage - camellia (*Camellia japonica*) and Middendorf's warbler (*Locustella octotensis*) by Rakusan Tsuchiya, 360 x 230 mm, woodblock



16 Blackened foliage – heavenly bamboo (*Nandina domestica*) and winter wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) by Beisen Kubota, 225 x 340 mm, woodblock



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17 Blackened background – Japanese oak (*Quercus serrata*) and crimson rosella (*Platycercus elegans*) by Jakuchū Itō, 385 x 250 mm, woodblock



18 Blackened background - camellia (*Camellia japonica*) and Japanese whiteeye (*Zosterops japonicus*) by Kōji Ikuta, 220 x 135 mm, mezzotint



19 Blackened background - plum (*Prunus mume*) and canary (Serinus canaria) by Hodō Nishimura, 240 x 370 mm, woodblock



20 Blackened background - Chinese trumpet-creeper (Campsis gandiflora) and cockatoo (Cacatua sp.) by Hodo Nishimura, 240 x 370 mm, woodblock



21 Contrasting black and white color – camellia (*Camellia japonica*), little egret (*Egretta garzetta*) and crow (*Corvus* sp.) by Koryūsai Isoda, 210 x260 mm, woodblock



22 Patches of unusual colors - hellebore (*Veratrum grandiflorum*), Kamchatka globeflower (*Trollius riederianus*), bunchberry (*Cornus canadensis*), Japanese trout lily (*Erythronium japonicum*), twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*), chickweed wintergreen (*Trientalis europea*), Japanese wintergreen (*Pyrola japonica*) and rock ptarmigan (*Lagopus muta*) by Fumio Kitaoka, 545 x 395 mm, woodblock



23 Matching colors - Japanese dogwood (Cornus kousa) and Japanese white-eye (Zosterops japonicus) by Hidetaka Yamanaka, 235 x 175 mm, mezzotint



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Shape - Flowers, fruits and birds each come in a variety of shapes. Some shapes are more unusual than others and it is these unusual shapes that are most likely to be eye-catching. Pictures 24-28 provide some examples of flowers or fruits with unusual shapes. For birds, it is the unusual bills, wings or tails that make them stand out. Pictures 29 to 34 show birds with these eye-catching features. Artists sometimes modified naturally-occurring shapes to make them even more unusual. In pictures 35 to 41 body proportions were exaggerated for added effect while in pictures 42 to 45 shapes were distorted to create novel and often entertaining forms. Shapes in pictures 46 to 48 were only partly completed by the artist. Viewers are allowed to complete these suggestive shapes in their own unique ways. Other artists changed the shape of the picture itself from the usual, boring rectangle to more interesting shapes including the octagon, ellipse and circle as shown in pictures 49 to 53.

24 Unusual flower shape - fan columbine (*Aquilegia flabellata*) and masked laughingthrush (*Garrulax perspicillatus*) by Gyōsui, 125 x 245 mm, woodblock **25 Unusual flower shape** - egret orchid (*Habenaria radiata*) and barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) by Gyōsui, 125 x 245 mm, woodblock

26 Unusual flower shape – Bigleaf
hydrangea (Hydrangea macrophylla)
and great tit (Parus major) by Gyōsui,
125 x 245 mm, woodblock







27 Unusual fruit shape - pomegranate (*Punica granatum*) and Eurasian siskin (*Carduelis spinus*) by Shizuo Ashikaga, 270 x 400 mm, woodblock



28 Unusual fruit shape - Japanese chestnut (*Castanea crenata*) and goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*) by Shizuo Ashikaga, 270 x 400 mm, woodblock



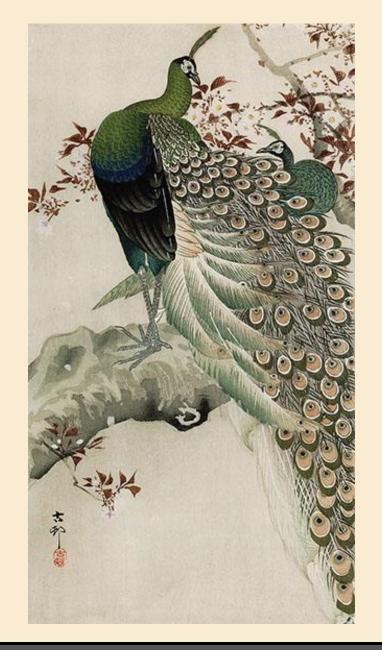
29 Unusual bird shape - sasanqua camellia (*Camellia sasanqua*) and mandarin duck (*Aix galericulata*) by Rakusan Tsuchiya, 475 x 340 mm, woodblock



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30 Unusual bird shape - Japanese mountain cherry (*Prunus serrulata*) and green peafowl (*Pavo muticus*) by Koson Ohara, 190 x 350 mm, woodblock

31 Unusual bird shape - Japanese mountain cherry (*Prunus serrulata*) and green pheasant (*Phasianus versicolor*) by Koson Ohara, 185 x 345 mm, woodblock





32 Unusual bird shape - tree peony (*Paeonia suffruticosa*) and strawtailed whydah (*Vidua fischeri*) by Rakusan Tsuchiya, 480 x 340 mm, woodblock



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33 Unusual bird shape - least water-lily (*Nuphar pumilum*) and common snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*) by Rakusan Tsuchiya, 475 x 340 mm, woodblock



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34 Unusual bird shape – fuchsia (*Fuchsia magellanica*) and rufous hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) by Tōshi Yoshida, 300 x495 mm, woodblock



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35 Exaggerated body proportions - Cotton-rose (*Hibiscus mutabilis*) and common kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) by Rakusan Tsuchiya, 360 x 230 mm, woodblock



36 Exaggerated body proportions - peach (*Prunus persica*) and barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) by Hiroshige Utagawa, 165 x 375 mm, woodblock

37 Exaggerated body proportions - camellia (*Camellia japonica*) and Eurasian tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*) by Hiroshige Utagawa, 175 x 385 mm, woodblock





38 Exaggerated flower petals - kobus magnolia (*Magnolia kobus*) and canary (*Serinus canaria*) by Sūgakudō Nakayama, 220 x 335 mm, woodblock



39 Exaggerated flower petals - fan columbine (*Aquilegia flabellata*) and Japanese quail (*Coturnix japonica*) by Sūgakudō Nakayama, 220 x 335 mm, woodblock



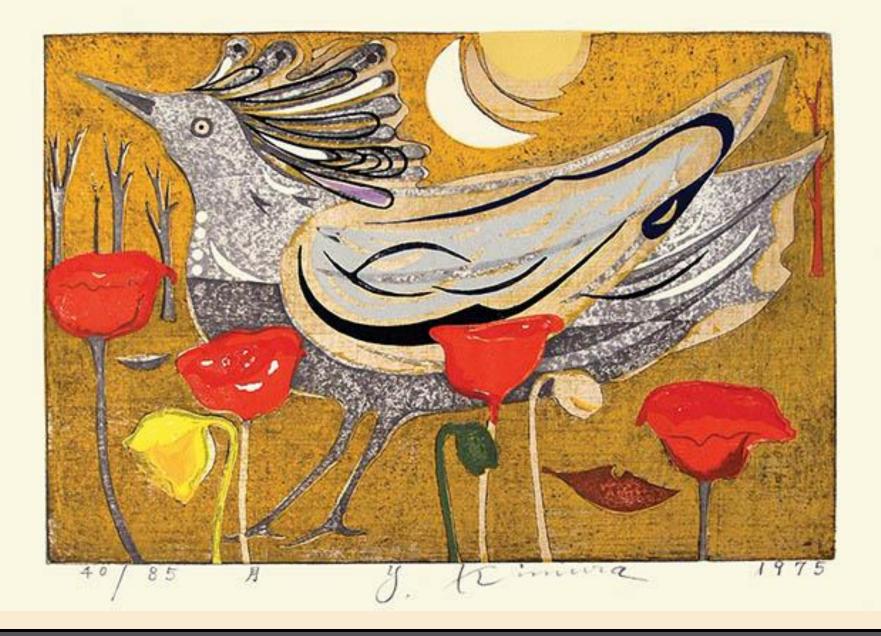
40 Exaggerated body proportions - kobus magnolia (*Magnolia kobus*) and Java sparrow (*Padda oryzivora*) by Hokusai Katsushika, 230 x 355 mm, woodblock

41 Exaggerated body proportions - four-o'clock (*Mirabilis jalapa*) and Japanese grosbeak (*Eophona personata*) by Hokusai Katsushika, 210 x 320 mm, woodblock



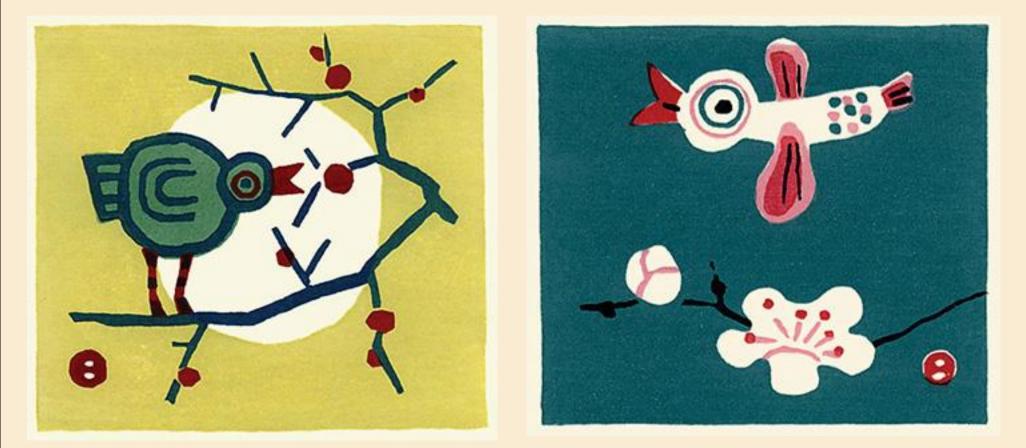


42 Distorted shape - poppy (*Papaver* sp.) and Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*) by Yoshiharu Kimura, 450 x 300 mm, woodblock



Distorted shapes - plum (*Prunus mume*) and perhaps the Japanese bush-warbler (*Cettia diphone*) by Umetarō Azechi, 120 x 110 mm, woodblock

Distorted shapes - plum (*Prunus mume*) and an unidentified songbird by Umetarō Azechi, 120 x 110 mm, woodblock



Distorted shapes – unidentified flower and bird by Motoi Ōi, 450 x 600 mm, embossed screenprint



46 Suggested shapes - Rice (*Oryza sativa*) and common moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*) by Seitei Watanabe, 245 x 180 mm, woodblock



47 Suggested shapes - pomegranate (*Punica granatum*) and white-cheeked starling (*Sturnus cineraceus*) by Suiun Komuro, 310 x 310 mm, woodblock



48 Suggested shapes - heavenly bamboo (*Nandina domestica*) and Eurasian tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*) by Kōyō Nakagawa, 240 x 345 mm, woodblock



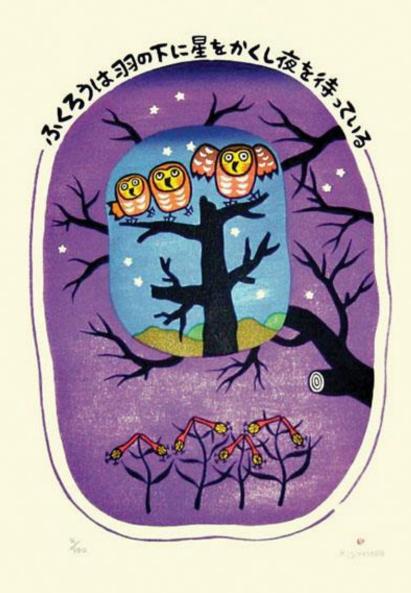
49 Unusual picture shape – camellia
(*Camellia japonica*) and scarlet macaw
(*Ara macao*) by Kakunen Tsuruoka, 275 x
470 mm, woodblock



50 Unusual picture shape - sasanqua camellia (*Camellia sasanqua*) and varied tit (*Sittiparus varius*) by Eiichi Kotozuka, 230 x 310 mm, woodblock

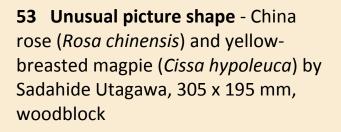
51 Unusual picture shape - trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) and Ural owl (*Strix uralensis*) by Kiyoharu Yamada, 260 x 370 mm, woodblock





52 Unusual picture shape –

dandelion (*Taraxacum* sp.), Chinese milk-vetch (*Astragalus sinicus*) and Japanese waxwing (*Bombycilla japonica*) by Kyōzō Yamada, 415 x 295 mm, woodblock



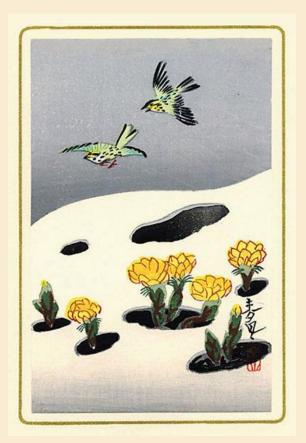




Size - Size matters when it comes to looking at flowers, fruits and birds. Extremely large or small individuals are more likely to attract our attention because they are less common and, therefore, more eye-catching. Pictures 54 to 57 show flower displays of extreme size. In pictures 58 to 60 large flowers or fruits have been combined with small birds to emphasize the naturallyoccurring difference in their respective sizes. Large birds are impressive on their own as shown in pictures 61 and 62. Other artists manipulated the size of their subjects to create imaginary giants or dwarfs for our viewing pleasure. Pictures 63 to 66 provide four examples. The size of picture itself, rather than the size of its subjects, makes it eye-catching in some cases. Picture size ranges from very large to very small in pictures 67 to 69.

54 Small to large flowers -

pheasant's eye (*Adonis amurensis*) and Eurasian siskin (*Carduelis spinus*) by Bakufū Ohno, 90 x 135 mm, woodblock



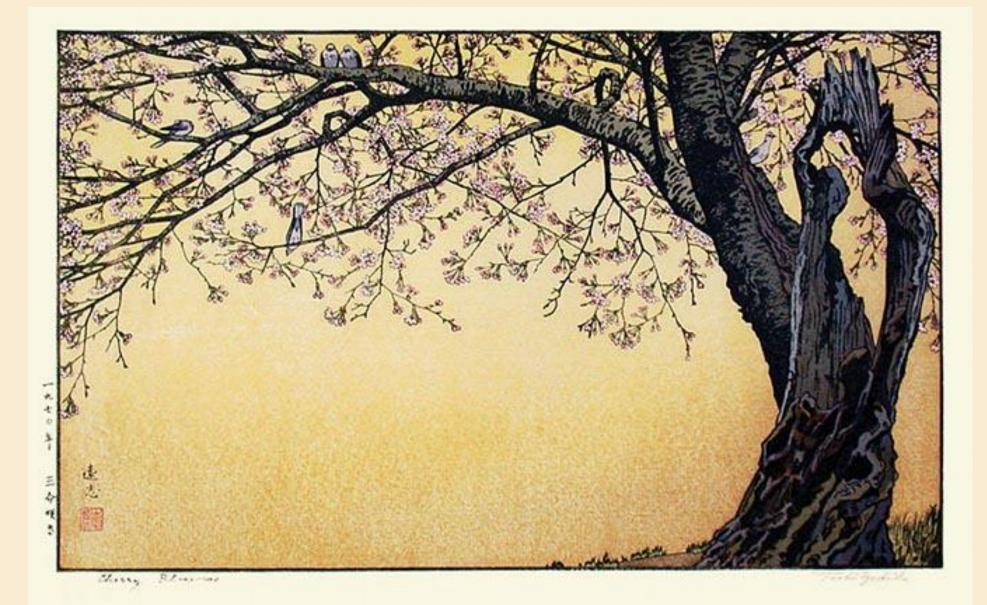
55 Small to large flowers - tree

peony (*Paeonia suffruticosa*) and blue magpie (*Urocissa erythrorhyncha*) by Bakufū Ohno, 90 x 135 mm, woodblock **56 Small to large flowers** - camellia (*Camellia japonica*) and Eurasian tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*) by Bakufū Ohno, 90 x 135 mm, woodblock





57 Large display of small flowers - Japanese mountain cherry (*Prunus serrulata*) and oriental turtle-dove (*Streptopelia orientalis*) by Toshi Yoshida, 500 x 300 mm, woodblock



58 Large flower and small bird - sacred lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*) and zitting cisticola (*Cisticola juncidis*) by Koson Ohara, 190 x 350 mm, woodblock

59 Large fruit and small bird - Japanese persimmon (*Diospyros kaki*) and Japanese white-eye (*Zosterops japonicus*) by Koson Ohara, 190 x 350 mm, woodblock





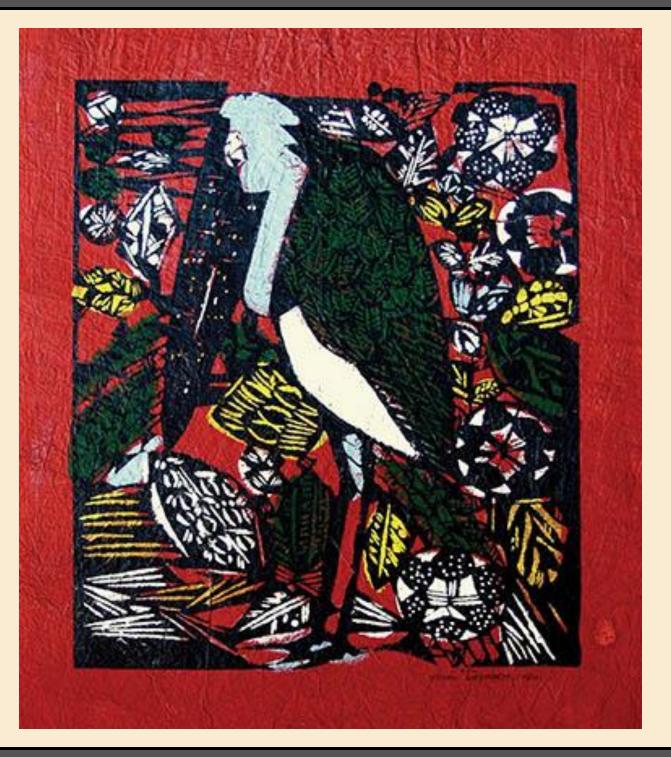
60 Large fruit and small bird - Chinese cucumber (*Trichosanthes kirilowii*) and domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*) by Koson Ohara, 180 x350 mm, woodblock

61 Small and large birds - Bunchflower daffodil (*Narcissus tazetta*), northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) and Eurasian tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*) by Hiroshige Utagawa, 130 x 380 mm, woodblock





62 Large bird – Unidentified flowers and lesser adjutant stork (*Leptoptilos javanicus*) by Sadao Watanabe, 450 x 530 mm, stencil



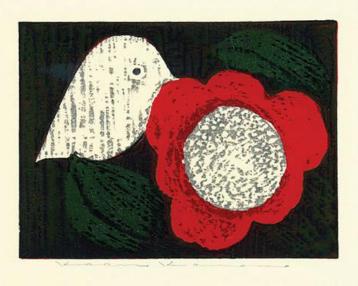
Giant bird - Japanese iris (*Iris ensata*) and little egret (*Egretta garzetta*) by Hiroshige Utagawa, 175 x 385 mm, woodblock

Dwarf bird - Japanese iris (*Iris ensata*), water-lily (*Nuphar japonicum*), Chinese arrowhead (*Sagittaria trifolia*) and little egret (*Egretta garzetta*) by Hōitsu Sakai, 130 x 255 mm, woodblock





65 Giant flower and dwarf bird – camellia (*Camellia japonica*) and unknown bird by Kaoru Kawano, 150 x 115 mm, woodblock



66 Dwarf flower and giant bird unidentified flowers and long-tailed tit (*Aegithalos caudatus*) by Tadashi Ikai,

365 x 195 mm, mezzotint



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67 Large picture – Japanese chestnut (*Castanea crenata*) and northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) by Tomikichirō Tokuriki, 300 x 775 mm, woodblock



68 Small picture - penstemon (*Penstemon* sp.) and hermit hummingbird (*Phaethornis* sp.) by Shigeki Kuroda, 70 x 95 mm, intaglio

69 Small picture - Penstemon (*Penstemon* sp.) and hummingbird by Shigeki Kuroda, 115 x 70 mm, intaglio



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70 Large picture - Japanese mountain cherry (*Prunus serrulata*) and large-billed crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*) by Koson Ohara, 170 x 330 mm, woodblock **71 Small picture** - Japanese mountain cherry (*Prunus serrulata*) and large-billed crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*) by Koson Ohara, 90 x 140 mm, woodblock





Action - Action attracts our attention whether we witness it live or in a picture. Some Japanese flower-bird pictures are eye-catching because the artist either shows the flower and bird subjects in action or suggests that action is imminent. It is relatively easy for the artist to show birds in action because they move about under their own power. Bird flight is communicated to viewers by simply showing the bird with its wings outstretched. Two particularly eyecatching birds in flight are shown in pictures 72 and 73. Unlike birds, flowers require the help of wind or the force of gravity to move. In pictures 74 and 75 the artist cleverly depicts this movement to energize the flowers. Imminent action can be suggested by placing a bird or a flower in an unstable position. Pictures 76 and 77 provide two eye-catching examples. Another way to suggest imminent action is to arrange objects diagonally rather than horizontally or vertically. We associate the diagonal with leaning and the action of falling is sure to follow. The diagonal arrangement of flowers and birds is very obvious in pictures 78 and 79. Another form of action is interaction between individuals of the same species or between different species. To suggest this interaction to the viewer artists often include more than just one individual in a picture. Interacting birds are featured in pictures 80 and 81 while interacting plants are shown in picture 82.

72 Flying bird - lespedeza (*Lespedeza* sp.) and lesser cuckoo (*Cuculus poliocephalus*) by Koson Ohara, 165 x 375 mm, woodblock

73 Flying bird - Japanese mountain cherry (*Prunus serrulata*) and scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by Koson Ohara, 240 x 360 mm, woodblock





74 Moving flowers - Japanese mountain cherry (*Prunus serrulata*) and black-headed gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) by Sōzan Itō, 165 x 380 mm, woodblock

75 Falling flower petals - cherry (*Prunus* sp.) and Eurasian tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*) by Zeshin Shibata, 225 x 160 mm, woodblock



liliiflora) and Java sparrow (Padda oryzivora) by Hiroshige Utagawa, 130 x 380 mm, woodblock

76 Unstable position - purple magnolia (*Magnolia* 77 Unstable position - camellia (*Camellia japonica*) and great tit (Parus major) by Hiroshige Utagawa, 130 x 380 mm, woodblock





78 Leaning - Japanese bindweed (*Calystegia japonica*) and Eurasian tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*) by Gyokushō Kawabata, 235 x 230 mm, woodblock

79 Diagonal - snake gourd (*Trichosanthes cucumeroides*) and Japanese white-eye (*Zosterops japonicus*) by Hiroshige Utagawa, 130 x 255 mm, woodblock



80 Interacting birds - lespedeza (*Lespedeza* sp.) and great tit (*Parus major*) by Rakusan Tsuchiya, 480 x 340 mm, woodblock

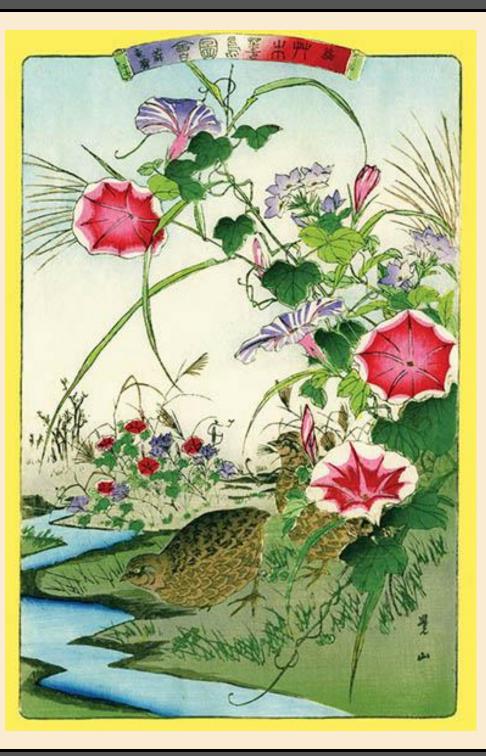


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81 Interacting birds - Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), morning-star lily (*Lilium concolor*), mandarin orange (*Citrus reticulata*), hardy begonia (*Begonia grandis*), aster (*Aster* sp.), scops owl (*Otus* sp.), Eurasian bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), canary (*Serinus canaria*) and Japanese bush-warbler (*Cettia diphone*) by Rinsai Shiba, 340 x 220 mm, woodblock



82 Interacting plants – Japanese morning glory (*Ipomoea nil*), eulalia grass (*Miscanthus sinensis*), scabrous gentian (*Gentiana scabra*) and Japanese quail (*Coturnix japonica*) by Gyōsan, 225 x 350 mm, woodblock



Unconventional view - Some Japanese flower-bird pictures are eye-catching because they provide unconventional views of flowers or birds. In pictures 83 to 85 birds are shown facing frontwards or backwards instead of the more conventional side-view. In pictures 86 to 91 flowers or birds are partly hidden from our view in contrast to conventional pictures which provide complete views of flower and bird subjects. Moonlight views of flowers and birds are much less common than sunlight views which makes moonlit pictures 92 plus 93 special. Conventional pictures show flowers and birds in focus with sharp edges. However, in pictures 94 to 96 the edges of flowers and birds are fuzzy rather than sharp making them appear to be out of focus. Conventional pictures also typically provide an eye-level view of flowers and birds seen at a comfortable viewing distance. Consequently, the close-up views of flowers and birds in pictures 97 to 100 are unexpected, especially when combined with a downward-looking or upward-looking viewing angle as in pictures 98 and 99.

83 Unconventional front view of a bird purple magnolia (*Magnolia liliiflora*) and Java sparrow (*Padda oryzivora*) by Koson Ohara, 130 x 250 mm, woodblock



84 Unconventional back view of a bird -Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and blue-and-white flycatcher (*Cyanoptila cyanomelana*) by Seitei Watanabe, 320 x 210 mm, woodblock



85 Unconventional rear view of a bird clematis (*Clematis florida*) and gray wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*) by Rakusan Tsuchiya, 360 x 230 mm, woodblock



86 Unconventional partial view of a
bird – Bigleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea* macrophylla) and barn swallow
(*Hirundo rustica*) by Seitei Watanabe,
320 x 210 mm, woodblock



87 Unconventional off-center view of fruits and a bird - Snake gourd (*Trichosanthes cucumeroides*) and white-cheeked starling (*Sturnus cineraceus*) by Seitei Watanabe, 320 x 210 mm, woodblock



88 Partly hidden flowers - common reed (*Phragmites australis*), Indian chrysanthemum (*Chrysanthemum indicum*), lyreleaf nightshade (*Solanum lyratum*) and little egret (*Egretta garzetta*) by Hōitsu Sakai, 255 x 380 mm, woodblock



89 Partly hidden flowers - plum (*Prunus mume*) and longtailed tit (*Aegithalos caudatus*) by Shundei Nakamura, 240 x 365 mm, woodblock



90 Rainy day view - cotton-rose (*Hibiscus mutabils*) and Eurasian tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*) by Gessō Yoshimoto, 230 x 360 mm, woodblock



91 Rainy day view - water chestnut (*Trapa japonica*) and little egret (*Egretta garzetta*) by Koson Ohara, 180 x 350 mm, woodblock



92 Moonlight view - common reed (*Phragmites australis*) and white-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons*) by Sōzan Itō, 165 x 375 mm, woodblock

93 Moonlight view - common reed (*Phragmites australis*) and duck (*Anas* sp.) by Koson Ohara, 185 x 340 mm, woodblock





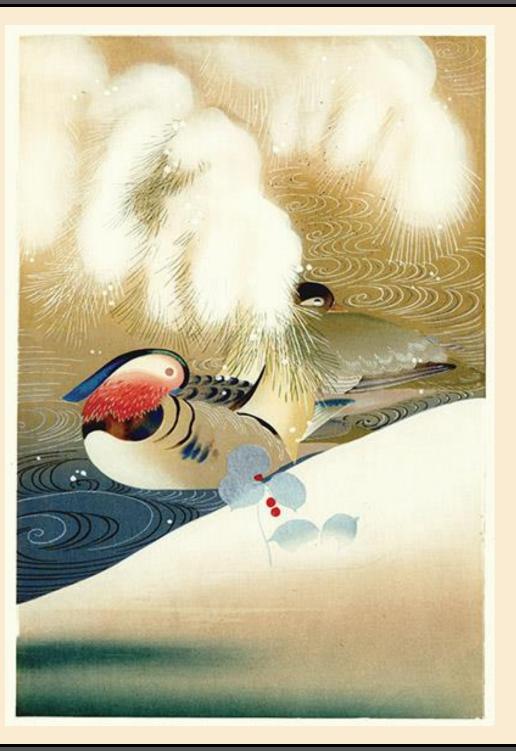
94 Fuzzy view - Japanese morning glory (*Ipomoea nil*) and great tit (*Parus major*) by Hidetaka Yamanaka, 360 x 230 mm, mezzotint



95 Fuzzy view - willow (*Salix* sp.) and oriental greenfinch (*Carduelis sinica*) by Mihoko Kasamatsu, 275 x 185 mm, woodblock



96 Fuzzy view - Marlberry (*Ardisia japonica*) and mandarin duck (*Aix galericulata*) by Kōyō Nakagawa, 240 x 345 mm, woodblock



97 Close-up side view - plantain lily (*Hosta* sp.) and chestnut-breasted munia (*Lonchura castaneothorax*) by Rakusan Tsuchiya, 480 x 340 mm, woodblock



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98 Close-up downwards view - bigleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*) and Japanese white-eye (*Zosterops japonicus*) by Hidetaka Yamanaka, 115 x 115 mm, mezzotint



99 Puzzling view - Japanese mountain cherry (*Prunus serrulata*) and Java sparrow (*Padda oryzivora*) by Taito II Katsushika, 375 x 245 mm, woodblock



100 Puzzling view - Japanese iris (*Iris ensata*) and mandarin duck (*Aix galericulata*) by Taito II Katsushika, 375 x 260 mm, woodblock

