

# Ten Influential Japanese Flower-and-Bird Printmakers

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Hokusai  
Katsushika



Morikuni  
Tachibana



Shigemasa  
Kitao



Kashū  
Numata



Sūgakudō  
Nakayama



Sōzan  
Itō



Seitei  
Watanabe



Bairei Kōno



Koson  
Ohara



Shōkei  
Yamada

## Introduction

In Japan, flowers and birds are popular subjects for art prints and more than five thousand such prints have been published during the past three hundred years. Not all prints have unique designs because some artists intentionally copied the designs of their predecessors, either completely or in part. There are a number of possible reasons why one artist would chose to copy the design of another. First, it could be intended as a sign of respect for the work of an artist whom the copier held in high regard (i.e., imitation as a form of flattery). Second, the copier may not have had first-hand experience with a particular bird or flower and chose to copy the work of a more experienced artist. Third, a publisher may have wished to profit from the popularity of a work by a particular artist and commissioned a similar work by another artist. Regardless of the reason for copying, it was a clear sign of artistic influence if one's work was copied by another. This virtual exhibition profiles the work of ten such influential artists whose designs for flower-and-bird prints were copied by later artists. Their original print designs and the copies they inspired are shown side by side to facilitate comparison. A total of twenty-six pairs, chosen from the Reader Collection of Japanese Art, are included below with the ten influential artists arranged chronologically as follows:

1. **Morikuni Tachibana** (born 1679 – died 1748) – 3 examples
2. **Shigemasa Kitao** (born 1739 – died 1820) – 4 examples
3. **Hokusai Katsushika** (born 1760 – died 1849) – 2 examples
4. **Sūgakudō Nakayama** (active 1850s) – 2 examples
5. **Bairei Kōno** (born 1844 – died 1895) – 4 examples
6. **Kashū Numata** (born 1838 – died 1901) – 2 examples
7. **Seitei Watanabe** (born 1851 – died 1918) – 3 examples
8. **Shōkei Yamada** (born 1866 – died ?) – 1 example
9. **Sōzan Itō** (born 1884 – died ?) – 1 example
10. **Koson Ohara** (born 1877 – died 1945) – 4 examples

## Additional Reading

Crossland, Thomas and Grund, Andreas. 2005. "Look-Alike" Prints of the Early "Shin-Hanga" Era. <http://www.ukiyoe-gallery.com/look-alike.htm>.

Jordan, Brenda G. and Weston, Victoria. 2003. Copying the Master and Stealing His Secrets, Talent and Training in Japanese Painting. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu.

Neumann, Dietrich and Schaap, Robert. 2004. Kachō-e by Seiko compared with Watanabe Seitei's illustrated books on birds and flowers. *Andon* 76:40-50.

**Original design by Morikuni Tachibana,**  
included in Ehon Ōshukubai (Picture Book  
of the Plum Tree where the Warbler  
Dwells), published in 1740.

Princess tree (*Paulownia  
tomentosa*) and mythical  
hō-ō bird



**Similar design by Yasukuni Tachibana,**  
included in Ehon Eibutsu Sen (Picture  
Book of Selected Subjects), published in  
1779.

Princess tree (*Paulownia  
tomentosa*) and mythical  
hō-ō bird



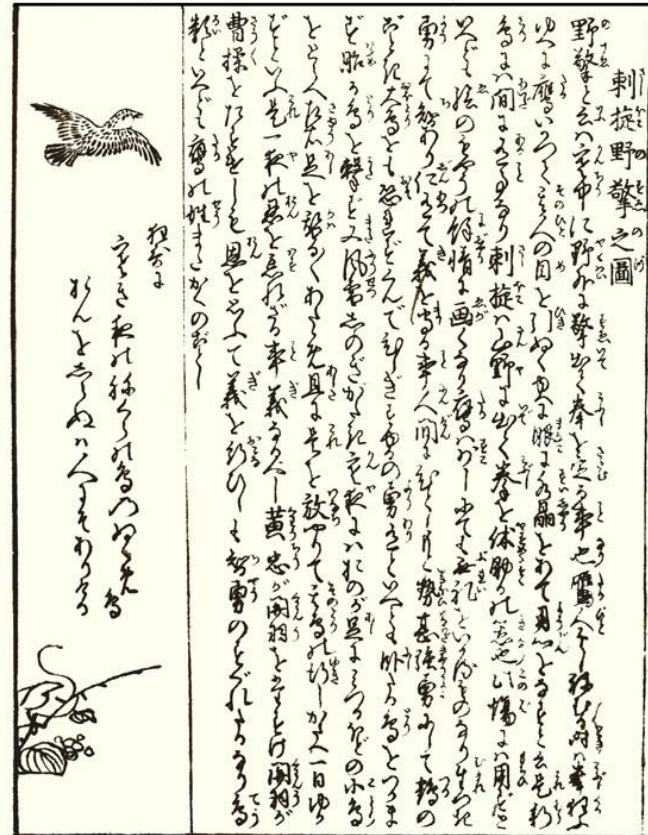


Original design by Morikuni Tachibana, included in Ehon Ōshukubai (Picture Book of the Plum Tree where the Warbler Dwells), published in 1740.



Chinese smilax (*Smilax china*), northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) and Eurasian tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*)

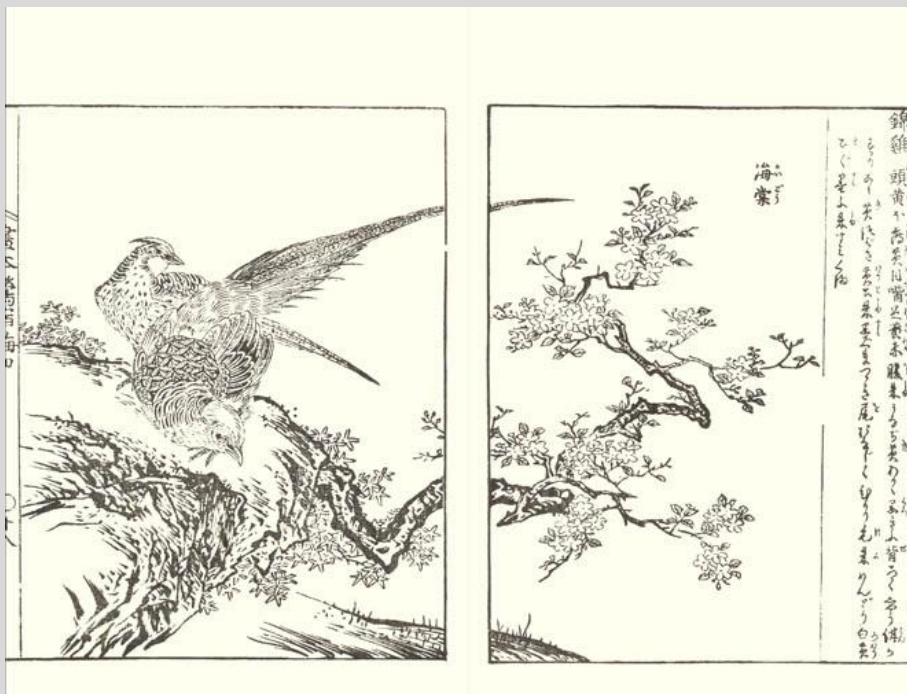
Similar design by Hiroshige Utagawa, published in 1830s.



Bunchflower daffodil (*Narcissus tazetta*), northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) and Eurasian tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*)

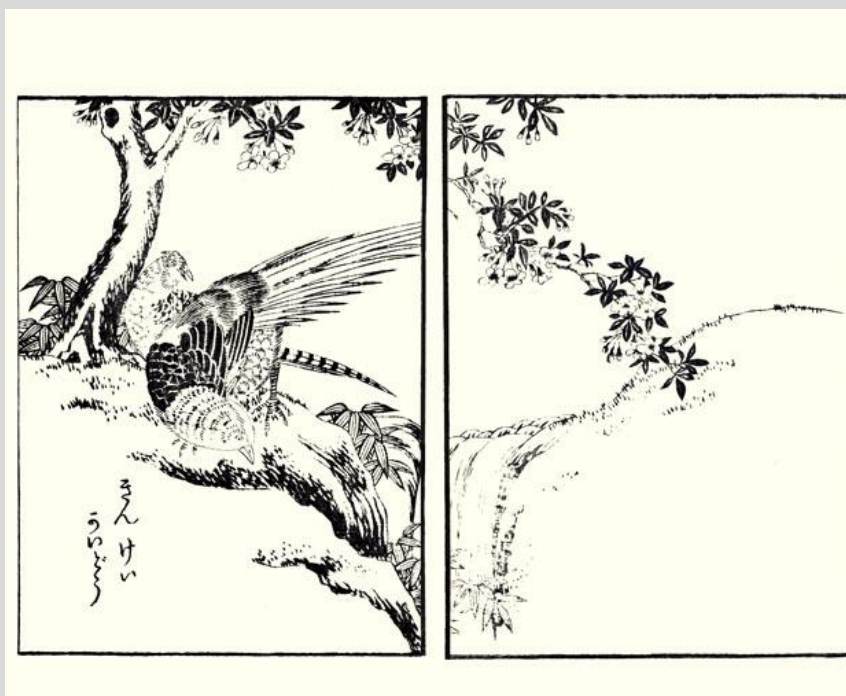
**Original design by Morikuni Tachibana,** included in Ehon Ōshukubai (Picture Book of the Plum Tree where the Warbler Dwells), published in 1740.

Hall crabapple (*Malus halliana*) and golden pheasant (*Chrysolophus pictus*)



**Similar design by Osui Asai,** included in Kachō Gafu (Picture Album of Flowers and Birds), published in 1879.

Hall crabapple (*Malus halliana*) and golden pheasant (*Chrysolophus pictus*)





**Original design by Shigemasa Kitao,**  
included in *Shashin Kachō Zue*  
(Naturalistic Pictures of Flowers and  
Birds), published in 1805-27.

**Similar design by Hiroshige**  
**Utagawa,** published in 1830s.



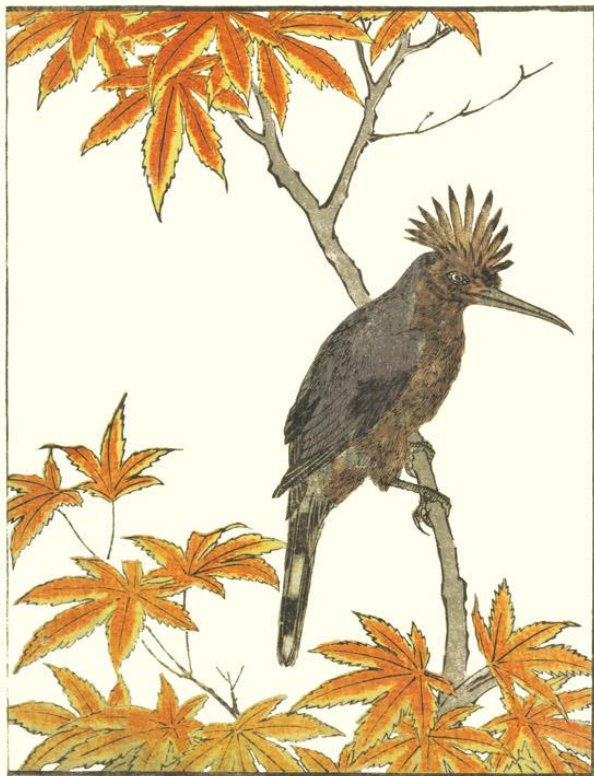
Hollyhock (*Alcea rosea*) and light-vented bulbul (*Pycnonotus sinensis*)



Hall crabapple (*Malus halliana*) and light-vented  
bulbul (*Pycnonotus  
sinensis*)

**Original design by Shigemasa Kitao,**  
included in *Shashin Kachō Zue*  
(Naturalistic Pictures of Flowers and  
Birds), published in 1805-27.

**Similar design by  
Hiroshige III Utagawa,**  
published in mid-1800s.



Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*)  
and Eurasian hoopoe (*Upupa epops*)

Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*) and Eurasian hoopoe (*Upupa epops*)



**Original design by Shigemasa Kitao**, included in *Shashin Kachō Zue* (Naturalistic Pictures of Flowers and Birds), published in 1805-27.

**Similar design by Yoshiharu Utagawa**, included in *Shinsen Kachō Zue* (Collection of Newly Selected Pictures of Flowers and Birds), published in 1878.



Oak (*Quercus serrata*) and white-backed woodpecker (*Dendrocopos leucotos*)

Oak (*Quercus serrata*) and white-backed woodpecker (*Dendrocopos leucotos*)



**Original design by Shigemasa Kitao,**  
included in *Shashin Kachō Zue*  
(Naturalistic Pictures of Flowers and  
Birds), published in 1805-27.

Japanese morning glory  
(*Ipomoea nil*) and  
oriental greenfinch  
(*Carduelis sinica*)



**Similar design by unknown artist,**  
included in *Kachō Zue* (Illustrations of  
Flowers and Birds), late 1800s.

Japanese morning glory  
(*Ipomoea nil*) and  
oriental greenfinch  
(*Carduelis sinica*)



**Original design by Hokusai Katsushika,** included in *Hokusai Gashiki* (Hokusai's Style of Drawing), published in 1819.

Common reed (*Phragmites australis*) and multiple species of birds, including ibis (*Threskiornis* sp.), Eurasian tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*), barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), goose (*Anser* sp.) and Java sparrow (*Padda oryzivora*)



**Similar design by Koji Shōsō,** included in *Kachō Gafu* (Picture Album of Flowers and Birds), published in 1832.

Common reed (*Phragmites australis*) and goose (*Anser* sp.)





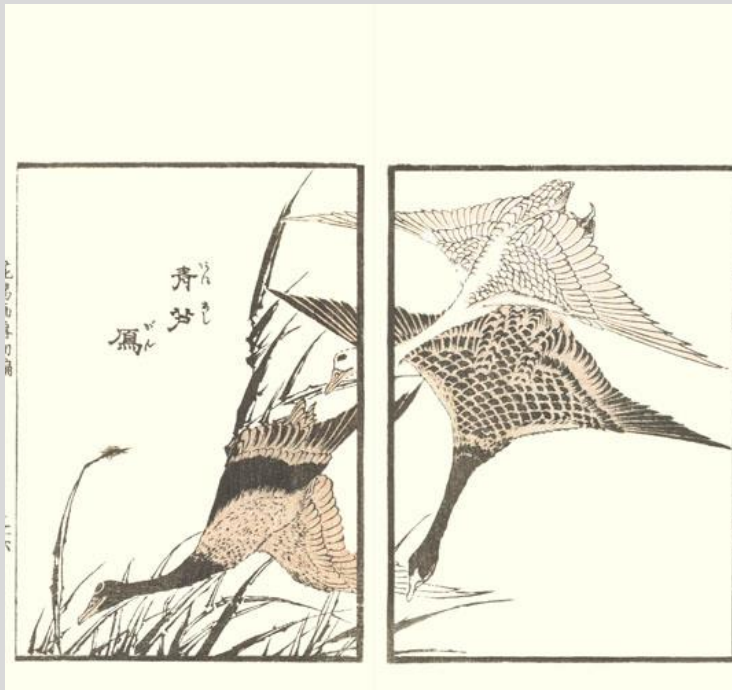
**Original design by Hokusai Katsushika,**  
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sparrow (*Passer montanus*), barn  
swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), goose  
(*Anser* sp.) and Java sparrow (*Padda  
oryzivora*)



**Similar design by Taito II Katsushika,**  
included in *Kachō Gaden* (Drawing  
Methods for Flowers and Birds),  
published in 1848-9.

Common reed  
(*Phragmites australis*)  
and goose (*Anser* sp.)



**Original design by Sūgakudō Nakayama,** included in *Shō Utsushi Shijū-hachi* (Exact Likeness of Forty-eight Hawks), published in 1859.



Chinese amaranth (*Amaranthus tricolor*) and barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

**Similar design by Sadanobu II Hasegawa,** published in late 1800s.



Chinese amaranth (*Amaranthus tricolor*) and barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)



**Original design by Sūgakudō Nakayama,** included in *Shō Utsushi Shijū-hachi* (Exact Likeness of Forty-eight Hawks), published in 1859.



Japanese mountain cherry (*Prunus serrulata*) and Japanese robin (*Erithacus akahige*)

**Similar design by Yoshitsuna Yamada,** included in *Ehon Kachō Soroi* (Complete Picture Book of Flowers and Birds), published in late 1800s.



Japanese mountain cherry (*Prunus serrulata*) and Japanese robin (*Erithacus akahige*)

**Original design by Bairei Kōno**, included in Bairei Hyakuchō Gafu (Picture Album of One Hundred Birds by Bairei), published in 1881.



Japanese andromeda (*Pieris japonica*) and brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*)

**Similar design by Bunrei Maekawa**, included in Bunrei Kachō Gafu (Picture Album of Flowers and Birds by Bunrei), published in 1885.



Japanese andromeda (*Pieris japonica*) and brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*)

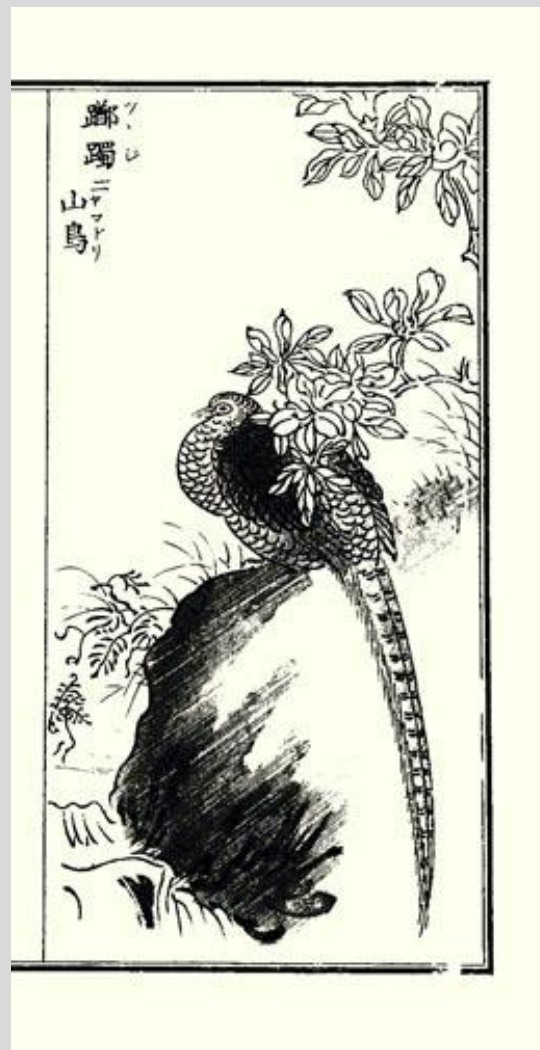


**Original design by Bairei Kōno**, included in Bairei Hyakuchō Gafu (Picture Album of One Hundred Birds by Bairei), published in 1881.



Satsuki azalea (*Rhodendron indicum*) and green pheasant (*Phasianus versicolor*)

**Similar design by Gyoshi Kōsoku**, included in Shiki Kachō Gafu (Flowers and Birds of the Four Seasons), published in 1891.



Satsuki azalea (*Rhodendron indicum*) and copper pheasant (*Syrmaticus soemmerringii*)

**Original design by Bairei Kōno**, included in Bairei Hyakuchō Gafu (Picture Album of One Hundred Birds by Bairei), published in 1881.



Barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)

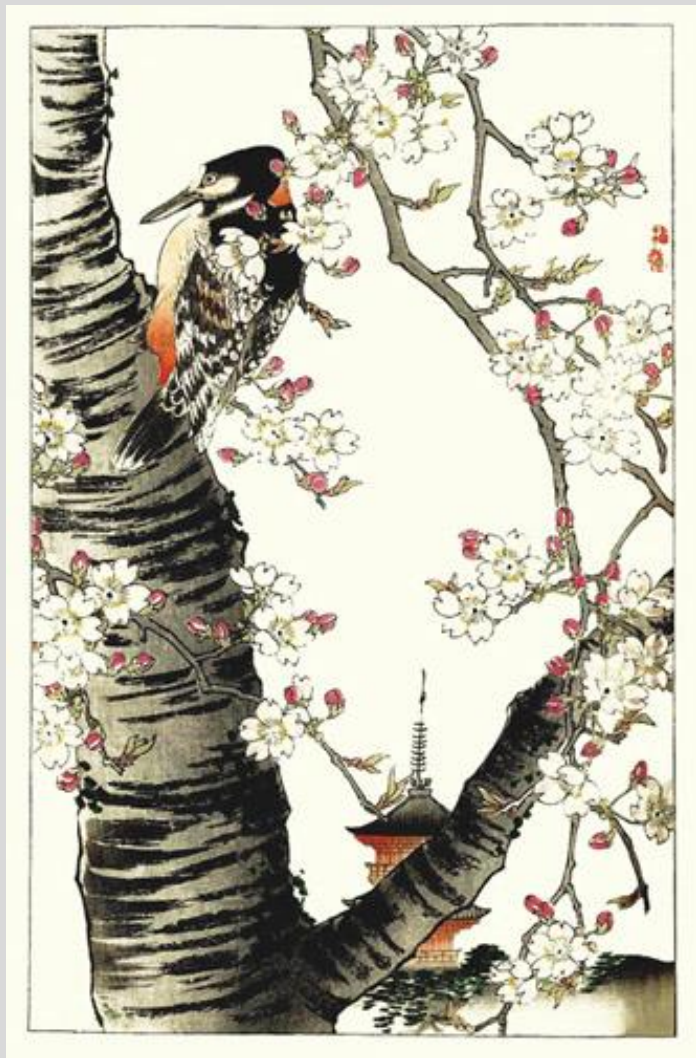
**Similar design by Yūkoku Matsui**, included in Kotori no Negura (Roosts of the Little Birds), published in 1901.



Rape (*Brassica napus*) and skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)

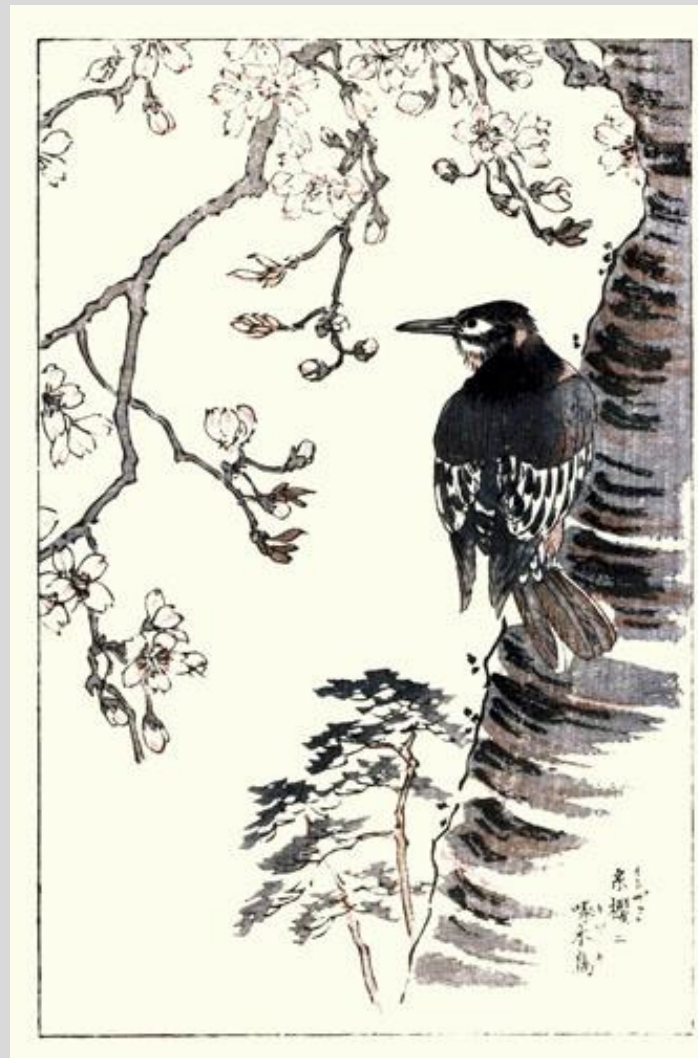


**Original design by Bairei Kōno**, included in *Bairei Kachō Gafu* (Picture Album of Flowers and Birds by Bairei), published in 1884 and reprinted in 1899.



Cherry (*Prunus* sp.) and woodpecker (*Dendrocopos* sp.)

**Similar design by Ginkō Adachi**, included in *Kachō Gafu* (Picture Album of Flowers and Birds), published in 1898.



Cherry (*Prunus* sp.) and woodpecker (*Dendrocopos* sp.)

**Original design by Kashū Numata,**  
included in *Shūchō Gafu* (Picture Album  
of Bird Drawings), published in 1885-90.

Tree peony (*Paeonia  
suffruticosa*) and green  
peafowl (*Pavo muticus*)



**Similar design by Ginkō Adachi,** included  
in *Ginkō Manga* (Sketches by Ginkō),  
published in 1902.

Common garden peony  
(*Paeonia lactiflora*) and green  
peafowl (*Pavo muticus*)





**Original design by Kashū Numata**, included in *Shūchō Gafu* (Picture Album of Bird Drawings), published in 1885-90.



Plum (*Prunus mume*) and canary (*Serinus canaria*)

**Similar design by Hodō Nishimura**, published in 1937.



Plum (*Prunus mume*) and canary (*Serinus canaria*)

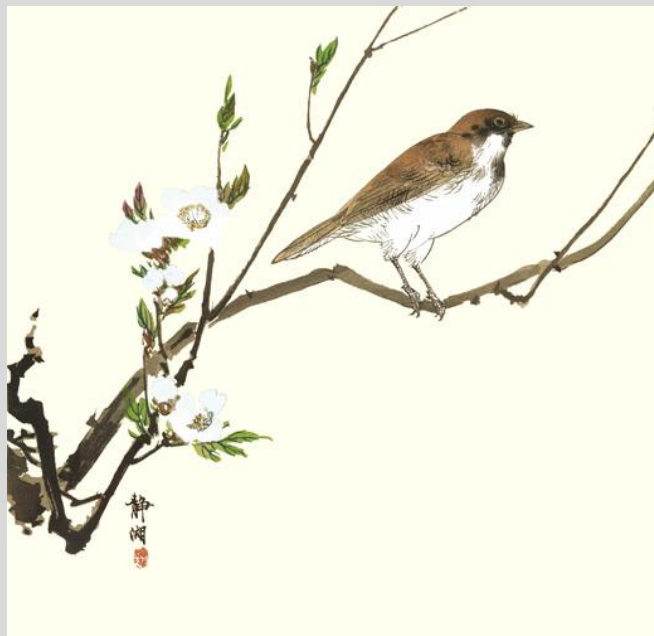
**Original design by** Seitei Watanabe,  
included in *Kachō Gafu* (Picture Album of  
Flowers and Birds), published in 1903.

Shirozakura cherry (*Prunus  
buergeriana*) and Eurasian  
tree sparrow (*Passer  
montanus*)



**Similar design by** Seiko, published in early  
1900s.

Shirozakura cherry (*Prunus  
buergeriana*) and Eurasian  
tree sparrow (*Passer  
montanus*)





**Original design by** Seitei Watanabe,  
published in *Nijūni Kachō* (Twenty-two  
Flowers and Birds), published in 1916.



Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and blue-and-white flycatcher (*Cyanoptila cyanomelana*)

**Similar design by**  
**Gyōsui**, published in  
mid-1900s.



Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), aster (*Aster* sp.) and blue-and-white flycatcher (*Cyanoptila cyanomelana*)

**Original design by** Seitei Watanabe,  
published in *Nijūni Kachō* (Twenty-two  
Flowers and Birds), published in 1916.

Willow (*Salix* sp.) and  
Japanese robin (*Erithacus  
akahige*)



**Similar design by** Keigetsu, published in  
mid-1900s.

Willow (*Salix* sp.) and  
Japanese robin (*Erithacus  
akahige*)





**Original design by Shōkei Yamada,**  
included in *Shōkei Kachō Gafu* (Picture  
Album of Flowers and Birds by Shōkei),  
edited by Gessai Fukui, published in 1895.

Cherry (*Prunus* sp.) and  
scops owl (*Otus* sp.)



**Similar design by Bihō Takahashi,**  
published in early 1900s.

Cherry (*Prunus* sp.) and  
scops owl (*Otus* sp.)



**Original design**  
by Sōzan Itō,  
published in early  
1900s.



Sweet osmanthus (*Osmanthus fragrans*),  
hyacinth macaw (*Amodorhynchus hyacinthinus*) and  
scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*)

**Similar design by**  
Shunkō,  
published in mid-  
1900s.



Sweet osmanthus (*Osmanthus fragrans*),  
hyacinth macaw (*Amodorhynchus hyacinthinus*) and  
scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*)



Original design by Koson Ohara, published in early 1900s.



Pomegranate (*Punica granatum*) and cockatoo (*Cacatua* sp.)

Similar design by Hodō Nishimura, published in 1938.



Chinese trumpet-creeper (*Campsis grandiflora*) and cockatoo (*Cacatua* sp.)

**Original design by Koson Ohara, published in early 1900s.**



Pine (*Pinus* sp.) and green peafowl (*Pavo muticus*)

**Similar design by Untan, published in mid-1900s.**



Pine (*Pinus* sp.) and green peafowl (*Pavo muticus*)



**Original design by Koson Ohara**, published in early 1900s.



Japanese persimmon (*Diospyros kaki*) and Japanese white-eye (*Zosterops japonicus*)

**Similar design by Keigetsu**, published in mid-1900s.



Japanese persimmon (*Diospyros kaki*) and Japanese white-eye (*Zosterops japonicus*)

**Original design by Koson Ohara,**  
published in early 1900s.



Cherry (*Prunus* sp.) and Japanese waxwing (*Bombycilla japonica*)

**Similar design by Seiko Aoki,** published in mid-1900s.



Cherry (*Prunus* sp.) and Japanese waxwing (*Bombycilla japonica*)

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