The **H. longipes** Complex = 岩ギボウシ Part 2

**The Rock Hostas**

**H. longipes var. longipes** (Franchet et Savatier) Matsumura 1894


**H. longipes var. vulgata** W.G. Schmid et G.S. Daniels 1991

The genus Hosta – Gibōshi Zoku, pp. 71-73

イワギボウシ = 岩ギボウシ = 岩擬宝珠 = Iwa Gibōshi = Rock Hosta (Japanese)

비비추 = Bi-bi-chu (Korean)

Including **H. longipes** f. alba (Nakai) T.B. Lee (White-flowered Rock Hosta)

シロバナイワギボウシ = 白花岩ギボウシ = Shirobana Iwa Gibōshi (Japanese)

흰비비추 = Huin-bi-bi-chu (Korean)

**References:**


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*H. longipes* Nakai (Orbicular Leaf Form)
Ex Herbarium: The Agricultural College; Korea
Rope Trails (in 秩父郡 Chichibu-gun)
Access to natural *H. longipes* populations is often arduous and difficult. The trails are very sheer and can be negotiated with the aid of strong ropes only. These ropes are installed at points where foothold is impossible. The ropes stay in place and allow descent and ascent, the latter being possible only with enough arm strength to pull oneself back up the precipitous incline. Studying hostas in the wild is hard work.

*H. longipes* (cultivated clone from M. Soules)
Obtained in Japan by M. Soules 1986; original habitat unknown
Cultivated at Hosta Hill R.G. ● ©W.G. Schmid 2006.05.21
Cultivated Species: A few cultivated species have Japanese vernacular names attached to them. One of these is *H. longipes* ‘Aki’ reportedly from the Tenryu River Area (天竜川 = Tenryugawa) in Aichi Prefecture (愛知県 Aichi-ken) and Shizuoka Prefecture (静岡県 Shizuoka-ken). The Japanese Aki (秋) stands for Autumn, as in Aki Gibōshi (アキ ギボウシ). The latter name is Japanese for *H. longipes* f. *sparsa*.

It is hard to distinguish between the typical species and some of its forms, unless all traits can be evaluated. In this case, the two photos show the typical species as indicated by the large, mature leaves. Collected species are frequently assigned names by collectors who are not trained in botany and taxonomy. For this reason they may not reflect the true identification of the taxon. A picture of *H. longipes* f. *sparsa* (= 岩ギボウシ 細い葉 = slender-leaf rock hosta) in situ is shown in Part 1, Page 9. Its correct botanical name is *H. longi-pes* f. *sparsa* (for its sparse flowering habit. In Japan, it is also known as Hosoba Iwa Gibōshi = ホソバイワ ギボウシ), which stands for *H. longipes* var. *lancea*, a name without priority. These forms are considered synonymous and are distinguished by narrowly lanceolate leaves, sparse
flowering and a much later flowering time than the typical species. The same is true for collected *H. longipes* species, which are assigned a location name, as for example Tochigi-san Iwa Gibōshi (栃木産岩ギボウシ). In this case the Japanese name indicates a collected taxon growing in Tochigi-ken (栃木県) but this is no precise botanical identification, although a location is helpful when differentiation species. At times, a collector’s or importer’s name is attached to a taxon, as is the case with *H. longipes* ‘Soules’. This may be helpful to trace origin, but more often than not, plants purchased in Japan may not have a precise habitat annotation. *H. longipes* from Soules is shown here and represents the typical species. Embellished names like *H. longipes* ‘Iwa Soules’ are superfluous, because the “Iwa” stands for Iwa Gibōshi that is already expressed in *H. longipes* (= Iwa Gibōshi). It is better to use the collector’s or importer’s name without the single quotes (which indicates a cultivar) and state the name as “*H. longipes* from M. Soules” as in the illustration on Page 3.

The origin of most cultivated species in the *H. longipes* complex rests with Roy Davidson, who spent several years in Japan in the late 1960s. Davidson (1970) reported on his observations of the natural populations of this species in Tochigi.

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*H. longipes* (in situ (神奈川県; Kanagawa-ken) © 2003 Starmaker/OL
Prefecture (栃木県). He was led by Dr. A. Moriya of the Biology Department of Utsunomiya University (宇都宮大学; Utsunomiya daigaku) in Utsunomiya City (宇都宮市; Utsunomiya-shi), who arranged several Hosta field explorations of Tochigi Prefecture. The researched area included Nikko (日光市) and its environs. The low mountain ranges east of Nikko near Tagi Shrine have many rocky cliffs that abound with Hosta longipes (both the typical form and the glaucous Hosta longipes f. hypoglauca). Both have stippled petioles. The leaf blades found among these populations vary in size and in outline from narrowly lanceolate to broadly ovate, often cordate and always acuminate. Samples of these populations taken (with permission) include the two mentioned, very distinct and easily differentiated variants. A selection with small leaves and short petioles was named H. longipes ‘Tagi’ (タギ岩ギボウシ. A second selection was named H. longipes ‘Setsuko’ (セツコ岩ギボウシ) for Dr. Moriya’s wife. This is a much larger selection with 15 by 25 cm (6 by 10 in.) on 12 cm (5 in.) petioles. This form is considered to be H. longipes var. latifolia. There is variation in these populations where some leaf blades are very blue-glaucous above and white below, the petiole solidly colored a gleaming purple. On rock outcrops near Iwasaki Kannon Shrine extensive populations with green petioles are found (scientifically H. longipes f. viridipes =アオヂク岩ギボウシ). In the lower area of the shrine a third colony of H. longipes is found in the same general area but in a more northern part of Nikko (日光市). The field investigations of Dr. Moriya, R. Davidson and the graduate students of Utsunomiya University have revealed the vast variability of H. longipes even within the limited area of its habitat in Tochigi Prefecture.

H. longipes 岩擬宝珠
Cultivated species (loc. cit. unknown) © 2003 H. Philips
H. longipes Matsumura No. 989038 (Flora of Korea)
Herbarium of Chonnam National University ■ Sample of Korean Populations
Chollanam-do; Koehung-gun; Youngnam-myun; Manho in Palyoung-san;
From 80 to 580 m (100 – 1,900 ft.) AMSL.
Coll. Hong, H.H., Oh S.P., Park A.K., and Yung H.Y. 1998.05.09
H. longipes
White-flowered form
白花 イワギボウシ
Shirohana Iwa Gibōshi
Cultivated
© 2003 H. Philips
For photographs of flowers in situ
See Part 1, Page 11

H. longipes ‘Aki’
Loc. cit.: 天竜川 = Tenryugawa
愛知県 (Aichi-ken)
Cult. leaf mound
Cultivated
© 2003 H. Philips
See explanatory text top of page 4

H. longipes inflorescence (cultivated)
© Quarry Hill Botanic Garden

H. longipes typical petiole color pattern
© 2003 H. Philips MyHostas.be
**H. longipes Sports from the Natural Habitat:** As pointed out in Part 1, *H. longipes* is not only extremely variable in the wild but also very prone to sporting. The Japanese have collected many of these sports, brought them into cultivation and named them. Following are illustrations of some of the major sports and most unusual find in the wild. Within this discussion of *Hosta* species only examples of existing sports can be given and I suggest that the Cultivar Section of the Hosta Library be consulted for the many existing *H. longipes* sports that have been named. The following color variations apply to *H. longipes* sports (some may be hybridized): 1) Monochrome yellow (黄金); 2) margins either white or yellow (覆輪); 3) white and/or yellow leaf center (中斑); 4) streaky or spotted variegation in the leaf (錦 or 斑); 5) unusually dark purple (maroon) spotting or solid dark on the scape and petioles and running into the leaf surface.

1) **Monochrome yellow sports of *H. longipes***: A yellow form of this species has been in cultivation since the mid-1980s. Several variants are available, differing mainly in leaf size and shape. A lanceolate form (Schmid 1991) does not belong here and is a sport of *H. longipes* f. *sparsa*, which see. Another yellow form came from Japan as Ogon Amagi Giboshi (黄金アマギ ギボウシ). It also does not belong here and is a sport of *H. longipes* var. *latifolia*, which see. The most common form has been growing at Hosta Hill since 1984 and was originally and is still sold under the illegitimate name *H. longipes* ‘Aurea’. It is also available as *H. ‘Ogon Iwa’. In Japan several yellow forms have been found in the wild (as reported by Watanabe 1985) and collected and named. They are usually called Ogon Iwa Giboshi (黄金 岩ギボウシ) combined with a location name, as explained later. One such sport was found in the prefecture of Tochigi (栃木県) by Rojiura-no-Giboshi. It is obviously a different sport with acuminate leaves that approach typical *H. longipes* morphology. Because it is a product of Tochigi (栃木産), the discoverer Rojiura-no-Giboshi gave
it the name 栃黄金, which transliterates to ‘Tochi Ogon’ so the name of this cultivar in western gardens is *H. ‘Tochi Ogon Iwa’*. This cultivar has intense yellow color.

◄◄◄ *H. ‘Tochi Ogon Iwa’*
栃木 黄金 岩ギボウシ
By Ken-ichi Gonokami aka Rojiura-no-Giboshi

*H. longipes* yellow form No. 2; *H. ‘Ogon Iwa’*
Cultivated as *H. ‘Ogon Iwa’* (黄金 岩ギボウシ)
This yellow form is different from the one shown on page 9. purple spotting occurs at the base of the sterile and fertile bracts.

NOTE: The petioles are mostly yellow but show some purple spotting at the base (see small picture). The scapes are red-purple spotted at the base but are otherwise yellow. There is intense purple spotting at the base of fertile and sterile bracts.
2) Margined sports of *H. longipes*: White- and yellow-margined sports have been found in the wild. Some have even margins and others are irregularly margined. They are sought after by Japanese collectors and given fancy Japanese names. Case in point is a sport from Chichibu (秩父産 = Chichibu product), which the discoverer Kosasa named 三峰錦. This name transliterates to Mitsumine Nishiki. Chichibu has many mountains, among them Mount Mitsumine (三峰山; Mitsumine-san) is the home of the 2000-year-old Mitsumine Shrine (三峯神社; Mitsumine-jinja) on the summit of this 1100m (3609 ft.) mountain. Nishiki (錦) means brocade, but in this case it means “excellently colorful.”

This form with variable yellow margins was found in Shizuoka-ken (静岡県). It is one of many yellow-margined sports of *H. longipes*. This mutation found found in Shizuoka (静岡産) was given the name 富士覆輪, which freely translated means “rich ornamental border.” Its transliterated western cultivar name equivalent is *H. ‘Fuji Nishiki Iwa’.*
3) **Sports of H. longipes with white and/or yellow leaf center:** These sports are more often than not somewhat streaky in color but are considered center-variegated. Quite a few are unstable in their variation patterns and require frequent dividing to maintain a certain variegation pattern. The following are examples of such sports:

►►►**H. ‘Okukuji Nakafu Iwa’**
(奥久慈中斑)
Loc cit.: Coll. Hisashi in Ibaraki Prefecture (茨城県 Ibaraki-ken)

►►►**H. Shiro Nakafu Reiho Iwa**
(白中斑霊峰 岩ギボウシ)

Sports with white centered variegation are occasionally found in the wild but also occur when hybridizing wild-collected plants. The one pictured here ► is reported to be a hybrid. A “snow-white” center (雪白中斑 = Shiro Nakafu). This one is named Shiro Nakafu Reiho Iwa Gibōshi (白中斑霊峰岩ギボウシ) translated “Snow-white Sacred Mountain Rock Hosta.” (© Kenichi Gonokami aka Rojiura-no-Giboshi 路地裏のギボウシこと 後ノ上 憲一)
4) and 5) Other Sports (Hybrids): A white striped and speckled form of *H. longipes* found in Shikoku (西国産). It is a rare find but has not yet been named. Not seen on this picture is the white powder coating on the leaf underside mentioned in the Japanese description (裏白). (Photo: Kenichi Gono-kami = Rojiura-no-Giboshi).

‘Rashao Iwa’ (Suzuki)
As described in the Japanese write-up, this is the result of a rare cross-breeding effort. This cultivar is described as an extremely rare hybrid of beauty and carries the name 超逸品 = “Ultra-rare Gem.” (Photo: © Ken-ichi Gono-kami aka Rojiura-no-Giboshi)

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