

Field Excursion at IPPS Japan 15th Conference in Ibaraki[©]

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The excursion was arranged on 19 Oct. to visit the nurseries and research institutes. In the morning under Indian summer weather, as many as 40 participants left the Tsukuba center terminal. The first visit was the Ozeki Nursery (Fig. 1) located northwest of Tsukuba city where Mr. Mitsunori Ozeki, the owner, has been devoted to the introduction of brand new selections of blueberry from U.S.A. and their propagation since 1984. He has managed this facility comprised of the mother-stock nursery, propagation area, and dispatching area, which totals about 3 ha. His motto is to reliably maintain the plant cultivars and their property information in the market. All the participants learned important information on the proliferation and cultivation of blueberries from his enthusiastic explanation (Fig. 2). We also enjoyed blueberry nectar and a couple of young plants as a gift which will provide a good combination for pollination and fruit set as was mentioned by his colleague. Travelling on the Joban Express Highway the delegates arrived at the Mochizuki Orchids Nursery in Ibaraki-Machi near the Lake of Hinuma, which is a beautiful public park. We were treated to very beautiful and strange-shaped orchids (*Paphiopedilum*). The mostly Maudiae-type hybrids showing green color attracted the participants' attention. Mr. Nobukazu Mochizuki, son of the owner, has spent a lot of his own time breeding Maudiae-type green hybrids. And also in the future he has the dream to breed these specific orchids and produce new and exciting selections of this orchid. More detailed information about Maudiae type *Paphiopedilum* hybrids is available in the article he wrote for these Proceeding.



Figure 1. Ozeki Nursery.



Figure 2. Mr. Mitsunori Ozeki who explains blueberry stocks to participants (center).

Lunch was by the Lake of Hinuma and this provided a good opportunity to exchange comments on the prior tour stops including business, academic, and personal information while we enjoyed a BBQ and liquid refreshments. The tour next continued southwards to visit the Forestry and Forest Products Research Institute located at Tsukuba City where a selection of trees (total 641 species) are grown including subarctic, cool temperate, and warm forest zone trees in the woody plants botanical garden as well as bamboo taxa.

Dr. Katsuaki Ishii from the institute highlighted his interesting experience relating to the flowering of moso bamboo, *Phyllostachys heterocycla* (Carrière) Matsum., and its resulting death. Moso bamboo has a 67-year flowering cycle according to the previous record. A bookmarker made from the bark of Japanese cypress was given to the participants as a memento of the visit. For the next tour stop we went southwards to inspect the Center for Environment, Health, and Field Sciences at Chiba University located in Kashiwa City. This facility is located next to the new Tsukuba express railway and is mainly a producer of transplants in collaboration with the private sector. The systems are employed for production of vegetable and ornamental nursery plants in cells under artificial light and environmental controlled atmospheric conditions. According to the last year's statistics, they produced 160,000 plants potted in containers such as *Petunia*; 30,000 plants proliferated by seed in cells such as *Viola* (pansy); 150,000 vegetatively grown plants in cells such as petunia and *Nemesia* (Fig. 3). The tour ended around 16:00. We all enjoyed an informative and fruitful tour and the participants left for home by Tsukuba express train bound for Tokyo.



Figure 3. Field of the Center for Environment, Health, and Field Sciences, Chiba University.