

# Winter

February 2026

## 桃栗三年柿八年

(*Momo kuri sannenn kaki hachinenn*)

Peach and walnuts three years, kaki eight years...

So goes the Japanese proverb—about the time needed for any meaningful endeavor.

Our persimmon tree (*Diospyros kaki* or alternatively Chinese, Japanese or oriental persimmon) at Atago Pond by Hiroshima's famous Shirakami Shrine is one of few fruit-producing *hibakujumoku*.

She is a stately specimen. Tall and seemingly sturdy, its fruit is of the 'shibugaki'—bitter persimmon—variety, thus inedible as is and with built-in protections against birds and bugs. Yet once peeled and dried in the sun for a few weeks it turns into sweet nectar and one of the superfoods. Kaki seeds have been found at Jomon archeological remains across Japan—so for at least 10,000 years they have been bringing nutrition to the inhabitants of these isles. Persimmon fruit drying in the sun also among the most beautiful sights of late autumn, in countryside of China, Japan and Korea.

The *Diospyros kaki* variety travelled from China all the way to Iran, an early voyager of the Silk Road. The wonderful scholars at *Encyclopædia Iranica* recently created [an entry](#) about its presence in Iran—in Farsi it is called 'Kormalu' or 'Khormalu'—combination of Khorma (date) and Alu (prune), probably due to its shape and sweetness. In this winter of discontent, with so much injustice and violence unfolding in Iran and in so many other places almost daily, we may feel at a loss. Tending to these amazing survivor trees a balm and source of strength—trees often wiser and gentler than us humans and have much to teach us about resilience, and defiance.

We have a whole [Persimmon Story](#) about our tree, including about how one of its offspring—nicknamed *Carlos' Tree* as tribute to the former UNITAR executive director—is growing a few meters away from its mother tree. As per the Japanese proverb above, it did in fact take *Carlos' Tree* about eight years to produce fruit. Last year we peeled and dried a few, and they were indeed sweet nectar. Here she is, photographed a few days ago, looking frail in winter gear. But spring is around the corner...

We would love to hear from our GLH family partners, if any of their 2nd generation Kaki have borne fruit. In the meanwhile, we hope you continue to cherish and nurture your own *hibakujumoku* descendants, and may they bring you each day the force and the wisdom to make a difference.

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Japanese Persimmon (*Diospyros kaki*)

カキ (柿)

530 m from the hypocenter

Location: 3 Komachi, Naka-ku, Hiroshima City (along Peace Boulevard, adjacent to Shirakamisha Shrine)