

The Mendel Exhibition

1. Intention

The Mendel Exhibition will be held at the Suwako Museum/Akahiko Memorial House close to Suwa Lake in Nagano Prefecture, from October 8 to December 18, 2016. The aim of this exhibition is to share with the public our collections relating to Gregor Johann Mendel (1822-1884), the founder of genetics. We also hope to increase familiarity with the life of Mendel and the great discovery that he made, which is the foundation of modern genetics.



Exhibition venue

2. Collections

The founder of the Japan Mendel Society, the late Professor Yosito Sinoto, was deeply interested in what Mendel did as well as the circumstances in which he made his discovery. Certain original materials relating to the St Thomas monastery at Brno, where Mendel carried out his experiments, were collected by Japanese scientists. These materials will be displayed at the exhibition and their significance will be explained.



Fern specimen made by Mendel



Prof. Sinoto

An important connection between Gregor Mendel and Japan is the Mendel grapevine. The grapevine was gifted to the late Professor Manabu Miyoshi in 1913 and has grown at the Koishikawa Botanical Garden of the University of Tokyo since 1914. The original grapevine at the St Thomas monastery died during the Russian domination of that part of Europe after World War II, but living material was sent back to Brno after the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989. This specimen is now flourishing in Brno and is producing grapes as it did during Mendel's time.



Mendel's grapevine at Tokyo

3. The Life and Great Discovery of Mendel

Mendel was born at Hynčice (Heizendorf) in Czech Silesia in 1822 and passed away as the prelate of the St Thomas monastery. In 1865, after 8 years of experiments, Mendel read reports on his experiments with pea hybridization at the regular meeting of the Moravian Science Society, and at this time he also deduced a law of heredity. In 1866, he contributed his paper on this discovery to the journal of the Moravian Science Society. However, his discovery and its significance was not recognized by other scientists for many years.



Prelate Gregor Mendel

4. The Rediscovery of the Mendel's Law and the Foundation of Genetics

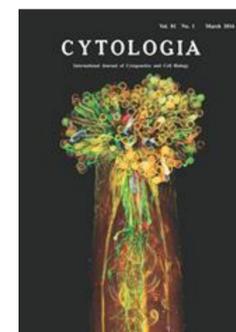
In 1900, three researchers in Europa (C. Correns, H. de Vries, E. Tschermak) apparently 'independently' rediscovered the Mendel's law. The possible reasons for the very late rediscovery of Mendel's work will be considered in the exhibit. Based on the foundation established by the Mendel, this new discipline of genetics was transformed into modern molecular genetics and molecular biology. The spectacular and rapid evolution of these scientific advances will also be considered in the exhibition.



Mendel's stature

5. The Japan Mendel Society

The Japan Mendel Society was founded by Professor Sinoto in 1984, although one of the Society's major activities, the publication of CYTOLOGIA, began as early as 1929. This journal was transferred to the Japan Mendel Society in 1990. CYTOLOGIA has wide international recognition especially in Asia countries. Contributors who published especially significant results in CYTOLOGIA may be awarded by the Wada Award. Previous awardees; Dr. S.S. Alam, Bangladesh, Dr. A. Tanomtong, Thailand, Drs. V.K. Singhal, R.C. Gupta, India, and Dr. Y. Suto, Japan.



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During the exhibition at the Suwako Museum/Akahiko Memorial House, on December 3, 2016, a series of lectures on genetics will be held in the town conference hall. Three colleagues will make presentations. Professor Mitsuru Sakaizumi, Niigata University, will speak about fish genetics. Professor Makoto Kusaba, Hiroshima University, will speak about the genes that Mendel studied, and Dr. Yumi Suto, National Institute for Radiation Research, will speak about the affect of radiation upon chromosomes. On October 8, a gallery talk will be given by Professor Toshiyuki Nagata, President of the Japan Mendel Society. On November 12, another gallery talk will be given by Professor Shigeyuki Kawano, Vice President of the Japan Mendel Society.



The First Winner of Wada Award, Prof. Alam(r.)

We gratefully acknowledge Professor Eva Matalova, Mendel Museum, Brno, Czech Republic for providing several of the images that are include in our exhibition.

For details, visit our website <http://square.umin.ac.jp/mendel/index-e.html>.