

Mr. Toshiaki Mori



ALICE IN WONDERLAND



'Alice Park'. This is what Mr. Mori calls the Arisugawa-no-miya memorial park. Why? Because walking through Arisugawa park is like being

Alice, wandering into the enchanted Wonderland. When he enters into the park, his mind shifts from thinking about his work to finding something that interests him in this vast nature. Then, when he steps outside of the park, he can look at the world in a new light. Even the ideas related to his work that he had before stepping into the park feels fresh and exciting to him. This story from Mr. Mori's hints us that we do not need to fall into a rabbit hole to free ourselves from boredom. We only need the slightest shift in our mind to always look for something interesting. So, if you catch yourself being bored on your daily walk to your workplace, try to look for something interesting, like a magpie chatting tenderly to its baby.

HOW IT STARTED

At first, he came to Arisugawa to take part in the radio exercise, and started taking photos only on the side of that. However, as time passed by, he got passionate about taking photos. He loved it so much that he has been continuing this for 10 to 13 years. He looks back to the time when he first started taking photos, when the park was less maintained. The park was left to itself for the nature to grow freely. However, there was recently a move to make the park a safer place for the children to visit. To do so, trees were cleared out to make the place brighter and easier to look out. He says that it cannot be helped since the park exists in the middle of the city. However, he still told us sadly that he fears that animals are disappearing from Arisugawa park because of such human intervention.



WHY ARISUGAWA?

“If it wasn’t Arisugawa, I wouldn’t have continued taking photos for 13 years.” The reason why he is so devoted to Arisugawa lies in the characteristic of its land. Unlike most Japanese parks, Arisugawa Park is on undulating land. Because of this, it allows Mr. Mori to get a shot from varying levels. There are more personal reasons as well. For him, Arisugawa park is his school, hospital, and a playground at the same time. Because this park relieves all the stress he gets from work and allows him to maintain his health from all the walking that he does, it functions as a hospital for him. Furthermore, since the people and the nature in this park provide him with new information everyday, the park is also like a school for him. However, above all, the park is a playground for him. That is why he aims to visit the park everyday until he can no longer walk.

RELATIONSHIP WITH ANIMALS

His love for animals began ever since he was little. Instead of forcing him into a normal cram school, his parents allowed him to go to a cram school where he can interact with nature. He laughed as he recalled a time where the teacher made him to place a woolly bear caterpillar on his skin to teach him that the poison on its fur makes his skin irritated. He also got to wrap a snake around his neck. He explains that the reason why curiosity comes first in his mind before fear when he encounters with animals in the park may come from such childhood experiences. During the interview, Mr. Mori entertained us with his knowledge of animals that he gained from his endless curiosity to these animals.



This is a picture of a balloon vine. When he first saw them, he was mesmerized at their seeds, which have the shape of a heart printed on it. Therefore, he named this photograph ♡泥棒: heart thief. To those who may have wondered, none of his photographs are photoshopped, including this one.



For those who are interested, this is the website for Arisugawa Park

<http://www.arisugawa-park.jp/english/index.html>

