

An Indian Kiyose

A season-word list for use in haikai poetry

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The expanded print version of *An Indian Kiyose* additionally contains the Triparshva renku *The Hawk's Grand Swoop*, by Kala Ramesh, Yajushi and Norman Darlington, as well as a full index.

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— INTRODUCTION — *An Indian Kiyose*

This modest booklet has grown out of my interaction with Indian poets, in recognition of the need to share a common understanding of seasonal phenomena in our reading and our collaborations. While it will hopefully prove useful for those writing haiku in the subcontinent, there can be no doubt that such a shared code is absolutely essential to poets who wish to engage in the composition of collaborative poetry in an Indian environment, and equally to those readers from outside the region who wish to gain a fuller understanding of Indian haiku and renku.

Let me immediately acknowledge my enormous debt to Dr. Gabi Greve in Japan, whose Indian Saijiki and World Kigo projects have not only blazed a trail for this kind of enterprise, but also gathered a very substantial proportion of the seasonal phenomena mentioned herein. In addition, I have garnered literary-seasonal data from classical Indian poetry, notably Kalidasa's fifth century Sanskrit poem, *Ritu Samharam* (The Gathering of the Seasons), and of course gained much information directly from the poets, primarily Mrs. Kala Ramesh and the late Yajushi (M. Ram Vinodh), during the composition of our Triparshva renku, *The Hawk's Grand Swoop* in 2006. It was the latter poem which radically broke the mould of the standard four-season approach common to Japan, Europe and the USA, and led renku out of the temperate zone and into India's classical six-season calendar.

A few words of explanation may be required of the lists which follow. The categories I have used (Inanimate, Humanity, Animals, and Plants) are self-explanatory, but, for those accustomed to using a traditional Kiyose, let me explain that for the sake of simplicity, I have subsumed under 'Inanimate' the traditional categories of Season, Heavens and Earth; under 'Humanity', the traditional categories of Humanity and Observances. I hope that

anything lost by conjoining these categories is more than made up for by the resulting ease of accessibility.

It is still early days in the codification of such seasonal data for haikai poetry in the Indian subcontinent. This booklet represents a small step forward, in tabulating the material to hand, but I have no doubt that there are many omissions and of course, despite my best efforts, some errors. I rely on my readers to help me address these. Please feel free to contact me by email with any relevant information, at norman.darlington@gmail.com. It is my intention to update and expand this booklet, and I will acknowledge all contributions in future editions.

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Bunclody, Ireland
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— **SPRING** — *An Indian Kiyose*

Vasant or **Basant** (*Spring*): the months of Chaitra and Vaishakh approximating to March and April

— **Inanimate** —

Spring Equinox

— **Humanity** —

Ambedkar Jayanti, Memorial Day (14 April)

Baishakhi Festival

Chidambaram Dance Festival

Goa Carnaval

Gudi Padva Festival

Hanuman Jayanti Festival

Holi

Kite flying

Mahavir Jayanti Festival

Pooram Festival

Raga basant

Ramnavami Festival

School exams

Shiva Ratri Night

Spring Festivals (Vasannta Utsav)

Vasant Navratri Festival

— **Animals** —

Bees

Cuckoo

Koel, *Eudynamys scolopacea* (its call)

— **SPRING** — *An Indian Kiyose*

— **Plants** —

Amaranth blossom

Champa bloom

Kimsuke blossoms

Mango blossoms

— SUMMER — *An Indian Kiyose*

Grishma (*Summer*): the months of Jaishthya and Aashadh
approximating to May and June

— **Inanimate** —

Drought
Dry riverbed
Earth dry
Ganges (Ganga) flowing down
Impending monsoon
Sluggish river
Sultry
Summer showers
Summer solstice

— **Humanity** —

Rollerskating
School holidays
Sleeping outdoors
Tukaram Celebrations
Vacation
Water shortage
World Music Day (21 June)

— **Animals** —

Cobra

— **Plants** —

Jasmine
Mango (fruit)
Pipal tree (*Ficus religiosa*) Peepul or Bo tree

— MONSOON — *An Indian Kiyose*

Varsha (*Rains or Monsoon*): the months of Shravan and Bhadrapad
approximating to July and August

— **Inanimate** —

Clouds

Cyclone

Flood

Lightning

Monsoon

Thunder

— **Humanity** —

Independence Day (15 August)

Juggernaut Festival

Malhar

Senior Citizen's Day (August 21)

Serpent Festival (Nag Panchami)

Tagore Memorial Day (17 August)

Trekking

Umbrella

— **Animals** —

Gazelle

Peacock

— AUTUMN — *An Indian Kiyose*

Sharad (*Autumn*): the months of Aashwin and Kartik
approximating to September and October

— **Inanimate** —

Autumn equinox

Fog, mist, haze

Moon

Second summer

Starry sky

— **Humanity** —

Airing sari

Diwali (Deepavali)

Drying papadums

Dussera: Day Of Victory

Firecrackers (during Deepavali)

Ganesh Chaturthi Festival

Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday (2 october)

Navrathi

Pinwheels (during Deepavali)

Teacher's Day (5 September)

Tiger Dance (Huli Vesha, Puli Vesha)

Vailankanni Festival (Chennai)

World Peace Day (21 September)

— **Animals** —

Wild geese

— AUTUMN — *An Indian Kiyose*

— **Plants** —

Kasa blooms

Lily

Lotus blooms

Ripening grain

Sesame (til, tila, gingilly)

— **FROST** — *An Indian Kiyose*

Hemant (*Frost*): the months of Margshishya and Pousha
approximating to November and December

— **Inanimate** —

December solstice

Heavy thick dew

Very cold

— **Humanity** —

Dance festival

Harvest festival (Sankrani or Pongal)

Music mahotsav

Nehru Memorial Day, Children's Day (14 November)

— **Animals** —

Curlew (its call)

— **Plants** —

Fresh sugar cane

Golden rice

— WINTER — *An Indian Kiyose*

Shishir (*Winter*): the months of Magh and Phalgun
approximating to January and February

— **Inanimate** —

Cold night

Thick dew

Winter sun

— **Humanity** —

Concerts

Fire (for warmth)

New Year

Poush-Magh Festival

Republic Day January 26

Shawls, sweaters

Tiruppavai of Andal

— **Animals** —

Damsel crane (its call)

— **Plants** —

Apples

Carrots

Golden (ripe) paddy

Lodhra blooms

Peas

Ripening barley

Turmeric, fresh (kurkuma, ukon)

Withered lotus

— MISCELLANEOUS — *An Indian Kiyose*

Miscellaneous (*non-seasonal topics*)

— **Inanimate** —

Earthquake

Ganges, the Holy River Ganga

Himalaya Mountains

Sun (Dinesh)

— **Humanity** —

Anklets (payal) , Bracelets, Bangles

Ayurveda and Massage

Bells, Temple Bells

Bhagavad Gita

Bodhidharma,

Buddha, Shakyamuni, Shaka

Dance

Football, Soccer

Ganesh The elephant-headed god

Guru (teacher)

Incense

Kumbh Mela

Labyrinth

Mandala

Meditation (dhyana)

Music

Panchatantra

Shivaji's forts

Silence (maun)

Sun god (Aditya)

Temple

— MISCELLANEOUS — *An Indian Kiyose*

Window

Yoga

— **Animals** —

Cow (Pashu, Gai) The Holy Cow of India

Monkey, Hanuman, Langur

Tiger

— **Plants** —

Bamboo

Banyan Tree

Basil (tulsi)

Henna (mehandi)

Lotus (padma)

Sandalwood (chandan)