

# CROSSROADS

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter December, 2020

## The Nature of Japan - tanuki -

The Japanese Tanuki are members of the dog family. Their name translates in English as “raccoon dog,” on account of their close resemblance to racoons, although the two animals are not at all related.



Unlike their dog cousins, Tanukis are nocturnal animals, poor runners, but excellent swimmers and can climb trees in search of food. Rather than actively pursuing their pray, they resign themselves to a more scavenging and foraging lifestyle. Our furry friends can eat just about anything and everything, from poisonous frogs to slugs to berries, and all manner of forest morsels. They also hibernate in winter.

Because of their stocky non-athletic disposition, when attacked, they resort to *playing dead*, until the attacker – hopefully – resigns.

The Tanuki are very well adapted to living in the vicinity of human settlements. They can thrive on a cat or dog food diet and anything they can find in people's gardens. The absence of natural predators in urban areas often leads to overpopulation, and in turn, culls have to be carried out.



The Tanuki are the most popular animals in Japanese folklore. Initially portrayed as evil tricksters, capable of possessing people with their belly-drumming and bringing misfortune, they evolved into an altogether different symbol. An equivalent of European garden gnome, Tanuki is now a harmless and fun-loving creature, fond of drinking and merry-making, encouraging generosity. Many people adorn their gardens with Tanuki statues, hoping it will bring them prosperity and business success.

*Article by Marek*

## Net News

**NET LESSONS:** Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

.... Try our *lessons on the net!*

For extensive information about Tanukis in folklore and art, head to:

[www.onmarkproductions.com/html/tanuki.shtml](http://www.onmarkproductions.com/html/tanuki.shtml)

# Some Thoughts for the Month



**Joshua Says:** Reading! Reading regularly in your second language (English), even for short lengths of time, gives a huge boost to your ability to improve your second language communication skills. But you should approach this task not from the point of “study”, but from the point of view of enjoyment. Read about the things that interest or entertain you, read for joy and you’ll be surprised just how much this will improve your all-round ability to communicate.

**Junko Says:** It’s the end of the year and we’re doing some “house cleaning.” We have quite a few English textbooks that we will not be using. They are new in the sense that they have never been opened. Instead of throwing them away, we’d like to offer them free to our students. You’ll find them near the large classroom. Just take home as many as you want– no charge!



**Marek Says:** It’s December and I see a variety of flowers still in bloom. Morning Glory, Cosmos and Dahlias are a real pleasure to see growing in parks and along the rivers. Flowers always manage to uplift my mood during colder months of the year. Scottish landscapes are mostly devoid of flowering plants throughout autumn and winter, so to see flowers almost all year round makes the cold and short days a lot more tolerable.

**Mandcy dit:** Chers étudiants, j’ai été ravie de passer cette année encore avec vous. On peut dire que cette année a été pleine de rebondissements!! Mais, Je suis très contente que nous soyons en bonne santé et que la vie continue. Je vous souhaite à tous un Joyeux Noël et une bonne année!! Mes meilleurs vœux. L’année prochaine sera belle et grandiose. Adieu Monsieur Corona et au revoir Monsieur Trump. Et Bonjour les Jeux Olympiques!



## ACROSS

- 1 grow with great success
- 4 similar to snails but with no shell
- 5 complete, entirely all
- 7 feeding on discarded refuse
- 10 remove things that are not necessary
- 13 having a short and solid appearance
- 14 give up, accept as inevitable
- 17 small quantities of anything
- 18 at the beginning
- 19 equal to
- 20 a mythological creature resembling a tiny man

## DOWN

- 2 similar in appearance
- 3 make more attractive by adding ornaments
- 6 described in words or represented visually
- 8 nearby
- 9 sleep during winter
- 11 an acquired habit or characteristic
- 12 following in order to overtake or catch
- 15 active at night
- 16 searching for food

## Play A Game!

Find the answers on P1

[\(print version here\)](#)

