

## Obituary to Norihiko Shimada

by Keith Green.

Having maintained contact with the highly respected “House of Shimada” over three decades, I was shocked just recently to learn that Norihiko Shimada passed away on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025. Although we never met face to face, we had corresponded over many years. Since I thought of him as being of a similar age to myself, the news was both sad and unexpected.

Although he never professed to be fluent, Norihiko had a good command of English, allowing information to flow, mainly from him to me. At the Gunsen-en Nursery in Japan, he grew many thousands of *Lithops* from seed every year, and was adept at spotting anything unusual for selective cultivation. This he performed with diligence, patience and a sound knowledge of science. Indeed, he had a PhD in agriculture and had been schooled in *Lithops* by his highly respected father, Yasuhiko. Without Nori’s help, I would not have known about several Japanese *Lithops* cultivars now in circulation, let alone anything of their origins.

Communication can be difficult when two people live so far apart and do not share a first language, yet on occasion Nori and I had the same ideas. His establishing of the yellow-green cultivar *L. otzeniana* ‘Midori-Otsue’ was one such instance. Historically many green *L. otzeniana* were labelled ‘Aquamarine’, which in fact were described as being “bluish grey-green”, a matter addressed by Nori. I once discussed this with Terry Smale, not knowing the Shimada family were already on the case and far advanced in pursuit of a correction.

Hopefully any projects Nori had ongoing within the “Lithops Laboratory Shimada” will be brought to fruition in his memory. His mantra of “select, select, select” will endure in any case.

The passing of Norihiko is a sad loss to *Lithops* lovers worldwide, and a great personal loss to his surviving family. From (as Yasuhiko wrote to me in 2001) “a far away country”, I send to them my sincere condolences.