

A Calendar of Words Seasonal words for October

October brings a clean coolness that clings to plants as glistening dew and washes over us not only in the morning and evening but even during the day. It signifies the arrival of autumn, a season of crisp, blue skies. The wide expanse of clear blue is often called *akibare* (clear autumn sky), and the autumn season is often expressed by the phrase “*ten takaku uma koyuru aki*,” which literally means “an autumn of clear blue skies and horses growing stout.”

Sometimes, a beautiful pattern of white clouds or white slivers of pale clouds appear in the autumn sky. Clouds like these are called *iwashigumo* (sardine clouds), because they resemble a school of sardines, which were conventionally one of the most commonly-consumed fish in Japanese households. They are also sometimes called *urokogumo* (fish scale clouds) or *sabagumo* (mackerel clouds), because they sometimes resemble fish scales or the patterns on a mackerel.

Another characteristic of the autumn season is unpredictable weather. This is described by the saying, *Otokogokoro to aki no sora* (a man's heart changes like the autumn sky). However, with the passage of time, the subject of the saying has changed from men to women, and now the more popular saying is *Onna gokoro to aki no sora* (a woman's heart changes like the autumn sky).

さいじき ことばの歳時記 がつかきご ～10月の季語～

10月は、草木に冷たい露が降り、朝晩だけでなく、昼間でも肌
がひんやりとします。まさに秋本番のこの季節は、すがすがし
い青空が広がり、この抜けるような青空を「秋晴れ」と言っ
たり、「天高く馬肥ゆる秋」と表現したりします。

その秋空に、小さな白雲の塊、または濃淡がほとんどないよ
うな雲の白片が集まっているのを見ることができます。これら
は「鯛雲（いわしぐも）」で、かつて日本人の食卓をにぎわせ
た大衆魚である鯛が群れるようなさまをしているので、そう呼
ばれています。魚のうろこのように見えるため、うろこ雲と呼ば
れたり、鯖の背の模様に似ているのでさば雲と呼ばれたりもし
ます。

また、お天気が変わりやすいのもこの時期の特徴です。これ
を例えたのが「男心と秋の空」。本来は、心変わりしやすい
男心を表現していましたが、時代の流れとともに男女が入れ替
わってしまい、今では「女心と秋の空」が一般的には知られて
います。