

Japanese Carp Streamers

(Koinobori, 鯉幟)



Carp streamers or carp-shaped windsocks (also known as “koinobori” in Japanese), decorate the landscape from April through early May, in honor of Children’s Day (kodomo no hi) on May 5. On this day, parents who have a newborn baby boy celebrate their son’s birth by flying carp streamers in the sky, above the roofs of houses, outside shops, and in the countryside, strung out over rivers. This day was designated as Boys Day or “tango no sekku”.

The carp streamer is a Japanese symbol of masculinity and success in life. The large koi are a symbol of the strength and determination to overcome all obstacles. It stands for courage and the ability to attain high goals because it is the most spirited of fish, and its ability to swim up a waterfall. The streamers are made of colorful decorated paper, cloth, nonwoven fabric etc. The size of streamers are generally a length of 100 meters, and weight of 350 kg .

The koinobori set consists of streamers, made of paper or cloth, hung from the top of a bamboo or wooden pole on down.



At the very top is a pair of two arrow- shaped spoked wheels (yaguruma) with a ball-shaped spinning vane = symbols of warfare.



At the top of the carp streamers is the streamer with colorful stripes (Fukinagashi). This one is of five lucky colors, but sometimes they are made of red and white (koohaku) only, another auspicious combination. These streamers were used during battle in olden times to indicate the whereabouts of brave warriors.



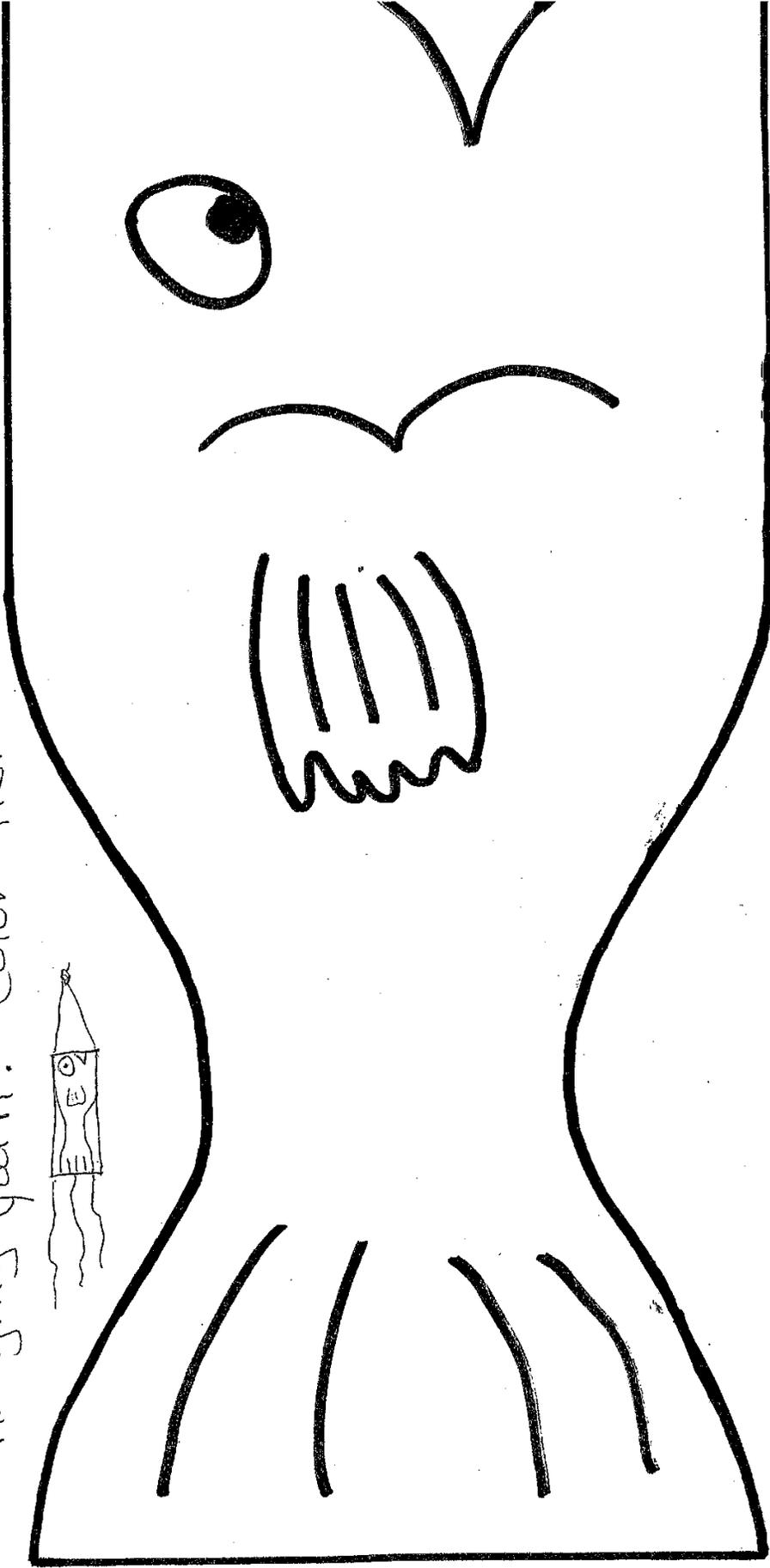
The largest and uppermost black carp streamer represents the father of the house (Magoi).

- The red carp streamer represents the mother of the house (Higo).
- The blue carp streamer represents the boy.
- The other carp streamers are children.

A koinobori set can cost anything from 10,000 yen (US\$100) to 60,000 yen (US\$600). Not cheap by any means, but you only have to buy them once, you use them year after year, and up close they are actually pretty cool.



Copy on to cardstock. Cut out shape, & trace outline on paper lunch bags. Cut opening on bottom of bag for air opening. Add plastic streamer tails & hanging yarn. Color fish.



Windsock Fish