



6994 A six-fold paper screen painted in ink and colour on a gold ground with a covey of uzura (quails) and chicks amongst kibi (millet), grasses, nokongiku (aster) and tampopo (dandelion).

Japan 18th/19th century Edo period

Dimensions: H. 74.5cm x W. 256cm (29½" x 101")

In Japan uzura (quails) are emblematic of autumn, fruitfulness and also symbolise martial valour due to their fighting spirit. They have been mentioned in poems and literature since early times such as Kojiki (Records of Ancient Matters, a collection of myths compiled in 712), Manyōshū, (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves, the Japanese oldest collection of poetry from the late 8th century) and Ise Monogatari (Tales of Ise, a collection of poems and narratives from the Heian period, 9th-10th century). A popular motif for paintings especially from the Muromachi period onwards they are usually depicted with millet or autumnal grasses and their popularity in the artworks continues to this day.

Millet is also associated with autumn and was introduced from the mainland to Japan during the Yayoi period (900BC - 250AD).



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