

Crapemyrtles (*Lagerstomia indica*)

While driving around Tulsa County, you will notice the “flowering queen of the state,” the crapemyrtle. They are deciduous, sun-loving plants that can be considered either shrubs or small trees. This flowering shrub will bloom from midsummer through the first frost. You will also notice various sizes of crapemyrtles, from the mini’s to standards, and in colors of pink, white, purple or red. These shrubs also will give you beautiful fall color when the leaves turn a golden red in autumn, and many have a very beautiful and showy bark. Homeowners are encouraged to consider size when making their plant selection as the cultivars also come in dwarf, semi-dwarf, and large. Some forethought and planning will prevent severe pruning to keep the shrub the size that you want. When the larger sizes are cut back, they form ugly knobs and the plant growth is more susceptible to disease and breakage.

Care and Growing Tips

These shrubs bloom on new wood. Don’t prune your crapemyrtles unless there is a need, such as a need for size constraints. Severe pruning does not increase numbers of blooms, just the opposite. If pruning is needed, do it in early spring, but wait until you see the new growth as they are one of the later plants to break dormancy. It is also advised to plant them in the spring rather than the fall in our location. They are relatively drought tolerant but do need supplemental watering when conditions are extremely dry.

In the past, powdery mildew was one of the problems with crapemyrtles, especially when planted close together or when receiving a lot of moisture. Now **Crapemyrtle Bark Scale (CMBS)** has found its way into Tulsa County. The Scale insect will deposit honeydew on the branches and foliage which encourages the growth of black sooty mold. If left untreated, the infestation can diminish the appearance of the crapemyrtle as well as reduce the flower size and quality. It is difficult to control, so call the OSU Extension office to get the management recommendations or refer to: <http://entopip.okstate.edu/Pddl/>

Crapemyrtles are a wonderful landscape addition whether you use them alone as specimen plant, in a border, or as a screen or hedge.

Remember to let the location dictate where you use this very popular shrub, one that will bring color to your landscape during our long, hot summers.,

Here is a list of common crapemyrtles available in our area according to size and color:

Mini

Rosey Carpet: Pink, 1 ft.

Violet Filli: Purple, 1 ft.

Baton Rouge: Red, 2ft.

Red Filli: Red, 1 ft.

Dwarf

Pocomoke: Pink, 3ft.

Tightwad: Red, 2-3 ft.

Centennial: Purple, 3-4 ft.

Cherry Dazzle: Red, 3-5 ft.

Pink Ruffles: Pink, 4-6 ft.

Dwarf Royalty: Purple, 4-6 ft.

Dwarf Snow: White, 4-6 ft.

Semi Dwarf

Acoma: White, 6-8 ft.

Siren Red: Red, 6-10 ft.

Hopi: Pink, 6-8 ft.

Standard (All 10–12 feet)

Burgundy Cotton: White

Catawba: Purple

Raspberry Sundae: Red to pink

Pink Velour (OK Proven Selection): Deep pink

Twilight: Purple

Sioux: Pink

Royal Velvet: Pink

Large

Red Rocket: Red

Muskogee: Purple, 15-20 ft.

Natchez: White, 15-20 ft.