

## *Lagerstroemia indica*

lah-ger-STRO-mee-uh  
IN-dih-kuh

### **(Crape Myrtle)**

*Lythraceae* (Loosestrife family)

Origin: China, 1759

#### **Species characteristics:**

Form - Deciduous. Variable, vase-shaped or domed small tree. Fast growing in hot areas to 25' tall with a 20' spread.

Trunk - Very attractive with smooth gray or light brown bark that flakes off to reveal dramatic, smooth pinkish inner bark.

Foliage - Spring foliage is light green tinged bronze red. Mature leaves are 1 - 2" long, oval, deep glossy green. Fall foliage varies with cultivars from yellow to orange and red.

Flowers/fruit - Crinkly 1½" flowers, borne in slightly conical clusters 6 - 12" long at ends of branches. Colors vary from white through pinks, reds and purples, June through September, with very showy flowers for the long summer blooming period. Clusters of seed capsules, borne on twiggy end branches persist through winter.

Cultivars - Over 30 cultivars are available. Some are more resistant to mildew than others. *L. indica* x *L. fauriei* has been used successfully in areas with coastal influence.

Significant pest problem can be powdery mildew.

#### **Site suitability:**

Sunset zones - all

Clearances - Suitable for 2' minimum parkways, medians or cutouts. Suitable under utility lines.

Good for street sides, medians, parks and lawns.

#### **Culture considerations:**

Best in hot inland and interior valleys. Full sun. Water infrequently but deeply. Drought tolerant once established. Tendency to chlorosis or marginal leaf burn in alkaline or saline soil. Use extreme care, as bark is fragile.

#### **Comments, notes:**

Education of public and use of trunk protection on trees both young and old will decrease mortality, especially in turf.

