

## Vascular Plants of Williamson County

*Lagerstroemia indica* – CRAPE MYRTLE, CREPE-MYRTLE [Lythraceae]

*Lagerstroemia indica* L., CRAPE MYRTLE, CREPE-MYRTLE (escaped cultivar). Shrub (in range) to small tree (cultivated specimens), fall-deciduous, not rosetted, typically several-stemmed at base, in range < 450 cm (cultivated trees to 700 cm tall); shoots with only cauline leaves, foliage leaves often with blade twisted from petiole, inconspicuously short-hairy to sparsely puberulent with only nonglandular hairs. **Stems:** 4-sided with 4 narrow wings, initially to 2 mm diameter, with 2 wings descending from each leaf, the wings to 0.35 mm wide and sometimes tinged reddish, soon aging brownish and young twigs forming thin, peeling strips (exfoliating), large, woody stems somewhat fluted with smooth outer bark, with patches of various shades of light brown to brownish (newly exposed surfaces) and gray (oxidized surfaces). **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, short-petiolate to subsessile, without stipules; petiole  $\pm$  short barrel-shaped, mostly < 1 mm long; blade broadly elliptic or broadly obovate to roundish, < 20–60(–70)  $\times$  < 10–34 mm, rounded to broadly tapered at base, entire, rounded or inconspicuously notched at tip, pinnately veined with midrib somewhat raised on upper surface and principal veins raised on lower surface, upper surface puberulent to short-hairy along midrib, lower surface with radiating short hairs along veins. **Inflorescence:** panicle, terminal and axillary approaching panicle, to 200 mm long, with < 15 lateral branches having the longest, with many (to 50+) flowers, lowest branch to 90 mm long often with secondary branchlets, lateral branches alternate, lateral branches and branchlets = dichasial cyme at least with a terminal flower and pair of diverging axes at the lowest fork, bracteate, having short-hairs along axes; peduncle subtended by foliage leaf, stemlike; principal axis 4-sided and winged, stemlike; bract subtending lateral branch leaflike and short-petiolate, petiole hemicylindric, blade ovate-lanceolate, from 30  $\times$  8 mm decreasing upward, mostly tapered at base, entire, acuminate at tip; lower axis of cyme stemlike, to 15 mm long; bracts subtending fork at first node sessile and obovate to spatulate, < 5 mm long, decreasing upward; pedicel at of terminal flower at node ca. 2.5 mm long. **Flower:** bisexual, structurally radial, 40–45 mm across; hypanthium (calyx tube) cup-shaped, 4 mm long, not ribbed, pale green or tinged reddish aging green in fruit, glabrous, inner surface lined with slick, whitish tissue, having a conspicuous whitish rim at top enlarged around bases of petals, lacking appendages; **sepals** 6, deltate, 3.5–4 mm not increasing in fruit, green or tinged reddish aging green appressed to fruit, in bud coherent by minute hairs along margins; **petals** 6, alternate with sepals, conspicuously clawed, glabrous, claw ascending, cylindric, 6–7 mm long, at anthesis rose and pale red, limb conspicuously wavy and crinkled, roundish in outline (flattened) but typically cordate at base (sometimes long-tapered), 13–15  $\times$  13–14 mm (flattened), orchid to dark rose (observed in range) or pink-purple, conspicuously toothed on margins; **stamens** attached at base of hypanthium near base of ovary, dimorphic, of 6 long stamens alternating with 6 fascicles of 4–6 shorter stamens fused only at base, glabrous; filaments of long stamens arched and above midpoint curving inward, lower portion somewhat compressed front-to-back, ca. 16 mm long, reddish rose (greatly twisted and green in bud), filaments of short stamens suberect but not straight, cylindric, 8–9 mm long, white, fused < 1 mm at base; anthers dimorphic, dorsifixed, dithecal, 1.7–2  $\times$  1.2 mm, orangish with a pair of fine red stripes (long stamens) and ca. 1.2  $\times$  1 mm, bright yellow (short stamens), longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, subspheroid, 2  $\times$  2 mm,

glossy greenish, 6-chambered, each chamber with ca. 3 ovules; style exerted, cylindrical and curved above midpoint, 17–20 mm long, in bud green base-to-tip at anthesis often reddish below midpoint, stigma subtruncate and dark green. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, dehiscent by 6 valves, to 18-seeded with seeds tightly packed in each locule, subspheroid, ca.  $9 \times 7.5$  mm, brown (immature fruit green and rounded or minutely dimpled at top). **Seed:** winged with basal seed chamber, overall D-shaped (side view) and thinly wedge-shaped on 1 edge of wing,  $6.5\text{--}8 \times 3\text{--}4 \times 1\text{--}1.5$  mm, seed chamber semicircular to oblique in outline.

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