

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Naturally Naked

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Variety of Sizes and Forms: Crape myrtles come in various sizes and forms, from small shrubs to large trees. On one hillside, I grow purple shrubs which I shape to size. I also have multi-trunk specimens. The versatility of crape myrtle plants allows them to fit into various garden styles and spaces, from small urban gardens to expansive landscapes like mine.

Attractive Bark: One of the distinctive features of crape myrtles is their exfoliating bark. The peeling bark reveals shades of brown, gray, and cream, adding a textural and visual element to the tree's appearance in winter.

Low Maintenance: Once established, crape myrtles are relatively low maintenance. They are drought-tolerant and can thrive in a variety of soil types. They also resist many common pests and diseases, making them a

practical choice for many gardeners. They can be pruned after blooming to reduce size, or allowed to flourish naturally for a fuller, taller tree.

Versatility: They can be used in various landscape applications, including as standalone specimens, in hedgerows, or as part of mixed borders. Their adaptability to different growing conditions and their ability to be pruned into various shapes make them versatile garden plants.

Because of the combination of a long flowering period, beautiful foliage, gorgeous naked bark, and adaptable nature, the crape myrtle is my beloved tree.

Nature may like to hide but with the naturally naked *Amaryllis belladonnas* and *Lagerstroemias* in full bloom in my garden, the curtain has been pulled wide open and the spectacle is a showstopper.

Happy gardening. Happy growing.



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Photo Cynthia Brian

The naked legs grow above the "turtle tops" of the resurrection lilies.