

Dwarf Crape Myrtle Landscape Trial – 2007 and 2008

Trial Location: Burden Center, Baton Rouge, LA

Background/Introduction:

The Razzle Dazzle® dwarf crape myrtles are a new series of crape myrtles developed by world-renowned horticulturist and breeder, Dr. Michael A. Dirr. As the first series within the Gardener's Confidence® Collection, the Razzle Dazzle® dwarf crape myrtles have been developed with the trustworthy attributes of easy care and mildew resistance, as well as exceptional color and compact habit. Mature height is 4 feet. Plants are being evaluated for flowering, cold hardiness and disease resistance at Burden Center in Baton Rouge. These are available at some wholesale nurseries in Louisiana. Plants were available starting in 2006 and have been available at retail garden centers in Louisiana since 2007.

Varieties in the series include: 'Ruby Dazzle' (pink blooms with bronze-red foliage), 'Cherry Dazzle' (cherry red flowers), 'Snow Dazzle' (white blooms), 'Dazzle Me Pink' (pink blooms) and 'Raspberry Dazzle' (raspberry red blooms).

More information on these plants:

http://www.gardenersconfidence.com/Razzle_Dazzle/Razzle_Dazzle.aspx

Materials and Methods:

Three gallon containers of the 'Razzle Dazzle' series crape myrtles, 'Chickasaw' crape myrtle and 'Pocomoke' crape myrtle were planted in late summer 2006 in full sun landscape trials at Burden Center, a LSU AgCenter agricultural experiment station in Baton Rouge, LA (USDA hardiness zone 8B, AHS heat zone 8). Plants were placed in raised rows of Oliver silt loam soil (normal pH 6.2) approximately five feet apart in a randomized complete block design with each cultivar replicated three times. Supplemental irrigation was provided as needed via a drip system. Plants were fertilized in March 2007 with Sta-Green Nursery Special 12-6-6. Pine straw mulch is maintained on the planting at a depth of two inches refreshed two times annually. Hand weeding, glyphosate and Amaze pre-emergent granular herbicide (at the recommended rate) were used for weed control. Plants have not been pruned, pinched, or deadhead from the initial planting time through 2008. In addition, fungicides and insecticides have not been applied.

Data:

Visual quality ratings based on a scale from 1 to 5 (1=dead, below average landscape performance, 3=average landscape performance, 4=above average landscape performance, 5=superior landscape performance) were taken monthly from April – November 2007 and monthly from April – November 2008. Included in this rating were plant foliage color and appeal, uniformity, flowering and overall growth habit. *Cercospora* leaf spot ratings were taken in October 2007 and October 2008 based on a scale from 1 to 6 where 1= no leaf spot, 2=1-10% foliage with leaf spots, 3=11-25% foliage with leaf spots, 4=26-50% foliage with leaf spot, 5=51-75% foliage with leaf spot, and 6=76-100% foliage with leaf spot. Height measurements were taken in October 2007 and October 2008.

	<i>Cercospora</i>				Plant Height	
	Visual Quality Ratings		Leaf Spot Rating		(cm)	
	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
Dazzle Me Pink	2.5	3.0	4.7	3.8	38.0	55.7
Snow Dazzle	2.7	3.1	4.7	3.2	61.0	88.7
Raspberry Dazzle	4.0	4.0	1.0	1.0	67.7	85.3
Ruby Dazzle	3.4	3.1	1.7	2.0	40.7	53.7
Cherry Dazzle	4.2	3.7	3.0	3.4	61.3	71.7
Chickasaw	2.8	2.8	4.3	1.5	48.3	49.3
Pocomoke	3.5	3.7	3.3	2.2	95.0	111.7

Contact Information:

Allen Owings, Professor (Horticulture)
LSU AgCenter – Hammond Research Station
21549 Old Covington Highway
Hammond, LA 70403
Phone 985.543.4125
Fax 985.543.4124
Cell 225.603.8096
E-mail aowings@agctr.lsu.edu

