

## **‘Ebony Fire’, ‘Ebony Flame’, Ebony Embers’, ‘Ebony & Ivory’, and ‘Ebony Glow’: Five New Dark-Leaved Crape Myrtles<sup>©</sup>**

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The Agricultural Research Service, USDA, has developed and released five dark-leaf crape myrtles: ‘Ebony Fire’, ‘Ebony Flame’, Ebony Embers’, ‘Ebony & Ivory’, and ‘Ebony Glow’. The cultivars are predominantly *Lagerstroemia indica* in heritage. As with most hardy crapemyrtle cultivars, selections are generally top hardy in USDA Hardiness Zone 7 and root hardy to Zone 6 if properly hardened for winter conditions. Plants have exceptional flowers and outstanding disease resistant foliage which maintains its dark color throughout the summer. Plants start flowering in south Mississippi in late June, with best flowering and most intense foliage color displayed when plants are grown in full sun. ‘Ebony Fire’ is first to flower while ‘Ebony Embers’ is last to begin flowering.

All cultivars display dense crown branching with excellent foliage coverage. ‘Ebony Flame’ and ‘Ebony & Ivory’ have upright growth habits, while ‘Ebony Glow’ is upright spreading, ‘Ebony Embers’ is vase shaped, and ‘Ebony Fire’ is globe shaped. Plants are projected to mature at 20 ft in most plantings, but can be easily maintained at a smaller size with a winter pruning to reduce plant proportions. The five Ebony selections are also being marketed under the Black Diamond™ (BD) trademark as: ‘Ebony Glow’ (Black Diamond™ Blush), ‘Ebony & Ivory’ (Black Diamond™ Pure White), ‘Ebony Fire’ (Black Diamond™ Crimson Red), ‘Ebony Flame’ (Black Diamond™ Best Red), and ‘Ebony Embers’ (Black Diamond™ Red Hot).

Additional information on ‘Ebony Embers’, ‘Ebony Fire’, ‘Ebony Flame’, ‘Ebony Glow’ and ‘Ebony & Ivory’ crapemyrtles and a list of nurseries propagating them are available upon written request to Cecil Ponders; USDA-ARS [[Cecil.Ponders@ars.usda.gov](mailto:Cecil.Ponders@ars.usda.gov)]. The USDA-ARS does not have plants for sale. Specimens of the five cultivars have been deposited in the National Plant Germplasm System as ‘Ebony Embers’ (NA 81466, PI 668407), ‘Ebony Fire’ (NA 81467, PI 668408), ‘Ebony Flame’ (NA 81468, PI 668409), ‘Ebony Glow’ (NA 81469, PI 668410), and ‘Ebony & Ivory’ (NA 81465, PI 668406).

