MUST-HAVE PLANTS

for the Late Summer Garden

s summer nears its end and the blooming power of many early sea-**L**son steadfast performers declines, consider incorporating these reliable and floriferous plants in the landscape to bridge the gap, painting the garden in color from mid-summer through the waning months

CRAPE MYRTLE (Lagerstroemia indica)

Eye-Catching and colorful — crape myrtle trees are the anchor in many late season gardens. Providing multi-season interest, crape myrtles dazzle in the summer landscape with shades spanning the color palette from white to lavender to magenta; they impress with orange and red foliage in the fall; and provide a striking silhouette in the winter with multi-stemmed trunks

and exfoliating bark. They average in size at maturity from twenty to thirty-five feet tall and twenty to thirty-five feet wide. Considered low-maintenance, crape myrtles prefer full sun and moist to average soil conditions and are considered deer resistant. Noteworthy varieties include 'Natchez' white blooms, 'Muskogee' — light lavender blooms, 'Tuscarora' — coral blooms, and 'Tonto' — fuchsia-red blooms which, at eight feet high and ten feet wide, can be trained into a large shrub or tree form.

While most people opt for the tree-form varieties of crape myrtle, multi-stemmed shrubs suitable for smaller landscapes or mixed planting borders are also available in a wide range of flowering panicles and foliage colors to satisfy the inclinations of most homeowners. The dark maroon foliage of

deep red blooming 'Center Stage' — twelve feet high and eight feet wide at maturity — creates an exclamation point in the landscape and, with its upright habit, can be incorporated into smaller gardens where larger tree-form cultivars are unsuited.

PANICLE HYDRANGEAS (Hydrangea paniculata)

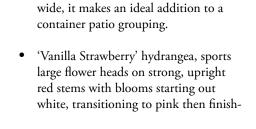
Another must-have in the late season garden, panicle hydrangeas paint the landscape in color from mid-summer well into the fall season. The flower shades of many longlasting, large blooming panicles transition throughout the season — emerging lime green and pure white changing to muted pink and burnt red as the weather begins to cool. They have an average growth rate, prefer full to part sun conditions and attract butterflies.







Panicle Hydrangeas • Hydrangea paniculata



• 'Limelight' is considered the classic pan-

icle hydrangea with characteristic lime-

green flowers emerging in mid-summer

hydrangea species and, at eight feet tall

and wide, can be trained into an accent

tree, well suited for the formal founda-

tion garden or landscape border. Other cultivars ideal for the patio garden or

• 'Little Lime' hydrangea, a smaller ver-

foundation garden or patio border.

• 'Little Quick Fire' is an early flowering

panicle hydrangea blooming about a

month earlier than most. With its di-

minutive stature at four feet high and

sion of the standard 'Limelight' with

similar color variations, however, at only

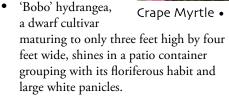
five feet high and wide, easily fits into a

smaller landscape include:

and transitioning to deep pink in the

fall. They are also the largest of this

ing as red at the end of the season. At six feet high and five feet wide 'Vanilla Strawberry' makes an eye-catching late summer accent.



Tolerating a high degree of salt spray and sunny conditions, both crape myrtles and panicle hydrangeas thrive in coastal environments, making them ideal candidates for the LBI garden. However, since both plants prefer moist soil conditions, it is advisable to install an automatic irrigation system or battery-operated soaker hose to maintain vigor and aesthetics, especially during the heat of the day.

Supplement these late summer beauties with 'Autumn Joy' (Sedum spectabile), Black-Eyed

Crape Myrtle • Lagerstroemia Indica

To purchase and learn more about these and other species of crape myrtles and panicle hydrangeas or to discover additional plant material suitable for the late summer garden, visit Reynolds Landscaping and Garden Center, located at 201 East Bay Avenue in Manahawkin. To check on the availability

of a specific cultivar, call Reynolds Garden

Center at 609-597-6099.

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to enjoy. —Elaine Sisko, Reynolds Landscaping Staff Writer

Susan (Rudbeckia spp.), 'Montauk' daisy

(Nipponanthemum nipponicum) and asters

(Aster spp.) to add enduring visual appeal

and family, butterflies, and hummingbirds

and prolong the season and for friends