



# DEEPLY ROOTED

*the extraordinary benefits of trees*

## Linden or American Basswood *Tilia americana*



### Native Range

Central and Eastern North America

### Description

The linden tree is noted for its clusters of fragrant, pale yellow, late spring flowers, small nuts which follow the flowers and ripen by late summer, viscous sap, noticeable winter buds, and large oval-shaped dark green leaves. Fall color is pale green to pale yellow. Winter twigs and buds are sometimes tinged with red. The beautiful linden wood is white and odorless.

### Pollination

The linden tree is pollinated by many species of bees and other insects.

### Environmental Benefits

When a tree is in full bloom, bees often visit in such abundant numbers that humming can be heard many feet from the tree. Honey made from the nectar of these flowers is a prized gourmet item.

### Environmental Concerns

No serious insect or disease problems. Generally intolerant of air pollution and urban conditions. Verticillium wilt is infrequent, but can be fatal. Powdery mildew, leaf spots and cankers may occur. Damaging insects include borers, beetles, lace bugs, caterpillars and scale. Spider mites can do significant damage, particularly in hot, dry periods. Bee mortality has previously been linked with mannose (a type of sugar) toxicity from the nectar.

### History

As the trees are good for carving, the Iroquois carved ceremonial masks on living trees, then cut them off and hollowed out the backs. The tree's leaves are edible and the fibrous, pliable inner bark (bast) was a significant source of fiber for ropes, cords, mats, and nets for Indigenous Peoples and European settlers; hence, the common name "basswood" is derived. Oil from the linden seed pod has been extracted and used as a substitute for olive oil. The fragrant flowers can be used to make tea and are distilled for use in perfumes. Syrup can be made from the sweet tree sap.

### Size

At maturity, height of 50' to 80' and spread of 30' to 50'.

### Ease of Tree Care

This widely grown tree is a favorite for roadsides, yards, and wide-open spaces. Water young trees well. Older trees are drought tolerant.

### Where to Plant

Linden trees grow best in well-drained, moist, fertile soils, but are very adaptable to less than favorable conditions. Space these handsome ornamental shade trees at least 20 to 30 feet apart.