

American Basswood (*Tilia americana*)

The Basswood tree, also known as the American Linden, can reach 80 to 100 feet in height, but is most often seen at 40 to 50 feet in height with a spread of 35 to 40 feet.

The tree is pyramidal when young but develops into a striking specimen with an upright, oval canopy atop a tall, straight trunk. The lower branches remain on the tree and gently drape toward the ground before sweeping up in a gentle curve.

The heart-shaped leaves are dark green throughout the year fading only to pale green or yellow before dropping in autumn. In June, the trees produce abundant clusters of very fragrant, light yellow blooms which are extremely attractive to bees, who make a delicious honey from their harvests. The small, grey nut which is later produced will persist on the tree until midwinter.

This tree is large and needs plenty of room to develop. Plant it as a specimen or shade tree where there is plenty of soil space available for root expansion. Be prepared to remove sprouts periodically from the base of the trunk.

This tree prefers moist, fertile soils, acid or slightly alkaline, in full sun or partial shade. It is more shade-tolerant than many other large trees. The leaves will show appreciable browning and scorching after a particularly dry season, but the tree appears fine the following year.

Information Source:

Gilman, E. F. and Watson, D.G. (1993). *Tilia americana: American Linden*. University of Florida. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/st634>

Photos by: Alicia Lamborn

