



Basswood

Tillia americana

Height: 20 m

Spread: 10 m

Native to: Eastern and Central North America

Grows in: Forests and ravines

Friends with: Often grows with Sugar Maple and Red Oak

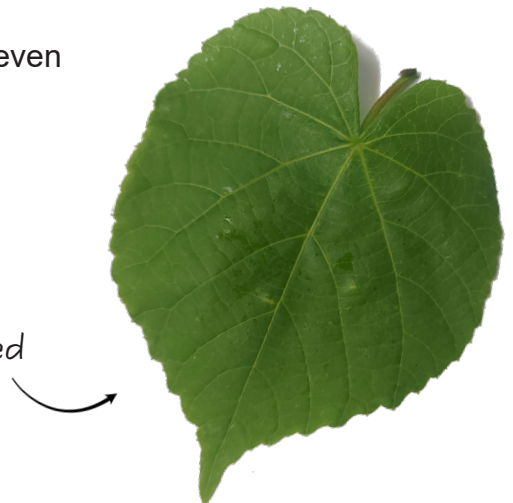
Basswood: Buzzing and Creative

- Basswood's tiny flowers are an important food source for pollinators like honeybees. You might find Basswood honey at the store.
- Basswood wood is lightweight and smooth, making it perfect for carving and making musical instruments.

How to Identify

- Basswood bark is grey-brown, developing long, narrow ridges as the tree ages.
- Buds are red-brown.
- Leaves are heart-shaped with jagged edges and are slightly uneven at the base. They turn bright yellow in fall.
- Lookalikes: Linden or Lime trees are the non-native relatives of Basswood. Their leaves are often smaller.

Check out this big, heart-shaped
Basswood leaf!



Flowers and Seeds

- Fragrant pale-yellow flowers appear in July, producing large amounts of nectar with high sugar content.
- Small, round fruit containing seeds are attached to a leaf-like bract, which acts like a parachute and allows wind to disperse seeds. Small mammals, like squirrels, eat the seeds.

Traditional and Historical Uses

- Indigenous communities have used Basswood to make cordage for weaving, as well as tea, food and medicine.
- The fibrous inner bark was often sourced for rope, mats, fish nets and baskets.
- Basswood appears in the Haudenosaunee creation story, and is often chosen for carving sacred masks.



Basswood flowers
and fruit



Toronto's Urban Forest

- Toronto's urban forest includes trees, shrubs and plants that help keep Toronto healthy, vibrant and full of life.
- These leafy companions support local wildlife, help many plants and animals live and grow, and protect our neighbourhoods from noise and rain.
- Trees clean the air we breathe and create shady places to gather, play and explore.



Vote Basswood for Tree of the Year!

Kids can vote for Toronto's 2027 Tree of the Year during Kids Vote Weekend, taking place at all 50 advance voting places on October 10 and 11.

By participating, kids will learn about the voting process and help support the City's goal of reaching a 40% tree canopy by 2050.



Fun Facts:

- Basswood makes amazing shade, great for staying cool on hot days.
- In summer, Basswood grows sweet-smelling flowers full of sugary nectar that pollinators love.
- Basswood grows smooth and even, making it a traditional favourite for carving or making musical instruments.