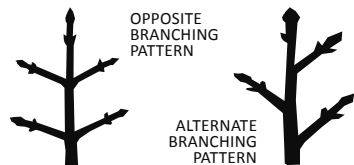


# TREE OF THE MONTH

Basswood • *Tilia americana*

AMERICAN BASSWOOD • AMERICAN LINDEN • LIMWOOD • HONEY TREE • BEE TREE

Basswood is native from New Brunswick to Tennessee and as far west as North Dakota, but grows best in the central Appalachian mountains. Large trees, basswood can grow up to 115 feet tall with a 4 foot diameter trunk. Fast-growing trees, basswoods frequently have two or more trunks and vigorously sprouts from stumps as well as seeds. Forest-grown trees have straight trunks that bear no lower branches until the upper canopy. Basswoods that grow in open environments such as fields or lawns have symmetrical crowns and branches reaching almost to the ground.



## CHARACTERISTICS

Basswood leaves are large, cordate (heart-shaped) with asymmetrical bottoms, and grow in an alternate pattern. They are sharply toothed, smooth, and dark green with a lighter underside. Twigs are thick and reddish with characteristic pot-bellied buds. Basswood bark is green to grayish. As basswoods age their bark progresses from shiny to deeply furrowed with narrow ridges.

## GOOD NEIGHBOR

Basswood likes to grow in rich soils alongside sugar maple, beech, yellow birch, white ash, red oak, red maple, American elm, white pine, and hemlock. In urban environments, however, basswoods tend not to thrive as they are intollerant of air pollution and salt spray.

## ETYMOLOGY

'Basswood' probably comes from 'bast' referring to the inner, fibrous bark. This bark has many uses, from rope to fiber for textiles.

## BEE TREE

In late spring to early summer Basswoods produce fragrant flowers that hang in clusters from long stalks. Each cluster is accompanied by round nutlets and a long strap-shaped bract. These flowers have abundant nectar that fuels prized honey, making basswood known as a honey tree or bee-tree. Many bird species are attracted to basswood seed and use the tree for shelter.



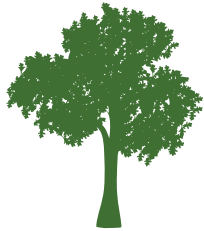
Bass Wood  
*Tilia Americana.*

## TEA TREE

For centuries, basswood flowers have been used to make medicinal tea to treat respiratory and gastrointestinal issues.

Tree of the Month is a collaboration between BEAT, the City of Pittsfield and Pittsfield Tree Watch. The Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT) works to protect the environment for wildlife and in support of the natural systems that sustain us all. Find out more at [thebeatnews.org](http://thebeatnews.org).





# TREE OF THE MONTH

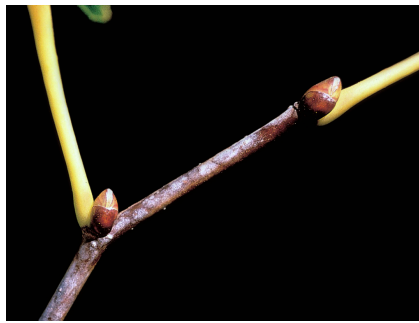
Basswood • *Tilia americana*

AMERICAN BASSWOOD • AMERICAN LINDEN • LIMEWOOD • HONEY TREE • BEE TREE



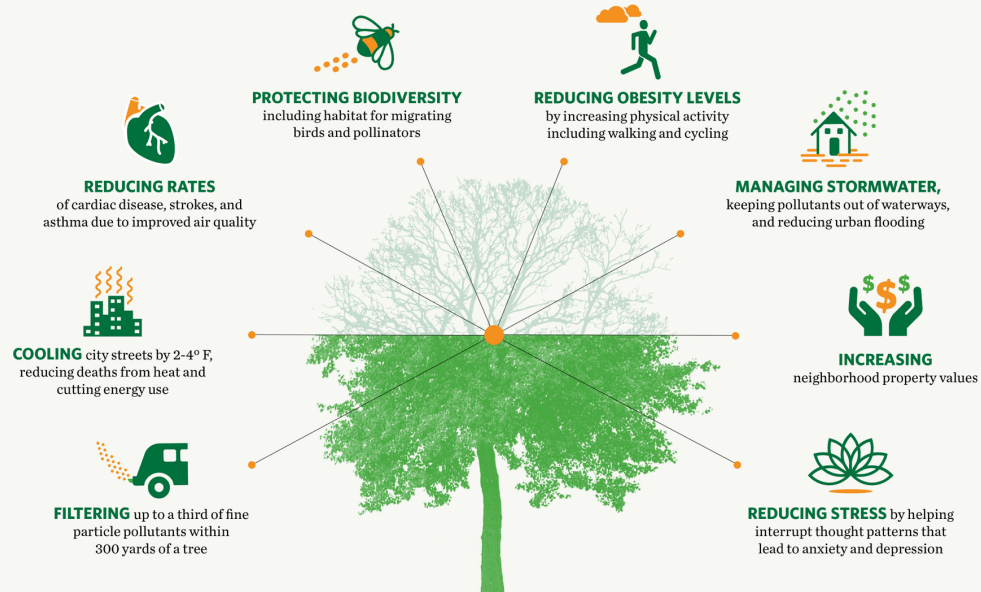
## LIGHT & USEFUL

Basswood timber is light and easy to work. The grain is usually true and straight meaning the wood rarely warps or splits. Common uses for basswood wood include crates, yardsticks, musical instruments, cabinets, and pulp. Basswood wood is also tasteless so it makes a good choice for cooking utensils and food storage.



## Benefits of Urban Trees

Research has linked the presence of urban trees to...



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