



American basswood

Tilia americana

Kingdom: Plantae
Division/Phylum: Anthophyta
Class:
Order:
Family:

FEATURES

The American basswood is a deciduous tree that may grow to about 80 feet tall with a trunk diameter of about two feet. Its bark is brown, scaly and furrowed. The leaves are simple and arranged alternately along the stem. Each leaf may be eight inches long and five inches wide. The leaf is toothed along the edges; smooth on the top surface; and smooth or hairy on the bottom surface. It is asymmetrical (uneven) at the base. Flowers are arranged in a cluster that extends on a long stalk from a paddle-shaped structure. The yellow-green, fragrant flower has five petals. The light brown fruit is hard, spherical, up to one-third inch in diameter and covered with fine hairs.

BEHAVIORS

The American basswood tree may be found statewide in Illinois growing in rich woods. This tree, also called the linden, flowers from May through July. Its fruits and twigs are a source of food for wildlife. The flowers are used by bees for honey production. The wood of this tree is used in furniture, paper pulp and for fuel.

HABITATS

- bottomland forests
- coniferous forest
- southern Illinois lowlands
- upland deciduous forest

ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: statewide

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.
Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.