

Littleleaf Linden Tree

To help residents recognize and appreciate our various trees in Ludington and assist in selecting trees for your property, the Ludington Tree Advisory Board periodically publishes articles describing different types of trees. These descriptions also are available on the City of Ludington's website under Tree Advisory Board. A Preferred Tree List for Ludington is available on the website as well summarizing characteristics of trees appropriate for our area.

Because of its dense canopy the Littleleaf Linden is an excellent shade tree. It tolerates urban areas and is appropriate for planting in lawns, street right-of-ways, and parks. Full sun is needed for adequate growth and mulching around the tree is beneficial. The tree should be grown with a single leader. Because it has no serious insect or disease problems, it is considered a low maintenance tree. Japanese beetles can be a problem in areas that have severe infestations. A native of Europe, the tree has been around since ancient times. Scandinavian folk lore suggests avoiding this tree at night because it is thought to be the haunt of elves and fairies.

Typically Littleleaf Lindens have an oval shape, grow at a moderate rate and reach a height of 60-70 feet with a width of 30-40 feet. The attractive heart-shaped 1 ½ to 3-inch-long leaves are shiny green and turn to a pale yellow to gold in autumn. Young trees have smooth trunks and as they get older ridges and furrows appear. In early summer very fragrant yellow flowers appear and in late summer small (about ¼ inch) round nutlets appear. The trees attract hummingbirds and large numbers of bees because they provide nectar and pollen for the bees.

There are several varieties of the Littleleaf Linden of which the most common is the Greenspire (scientific name: *Tilia cordata* 'Greenspire'). Often considered the best of the Littleleaf Lindens, it reaches about 50 feet in height, 30 feet in width, and is pyramidal in shape. This variety is very tolerant of different types of growing conditions. A small variety is the Summer Sprite (scientific name: *Tilia cordata* 'Halka') which reaches only about 20 feet in height and 15 feet in width and has a rounded shape.

Ludington is fortunate to have numerous Greenspire Littleleaf Lindens and they have done well in this area. Many of these trees can be seen along the public marina on West Loomis and South Ferry streets.





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