

**Common Name:** Small-leaved Lime

**Scientific Name:** *Tilia cordata*

**Family:** *Tiliaceae*

**Alternative Names:** Linden, Baste-tree, Pry.

**Range:** Throughout British Isles rarer in Scotland and Ireland

**Habitat:** In old woodlands mainly on basic soil.

**Key Identification Features:** Tree up to 30 m tall. Pointed heart shaped leaves 3-9cm long with rust coloured tufts of hairs in the vein axils and at the base of the leaf. Leaves and buds arranged alternately on the twigs which zig-zag at each bud. Twigs often are a reddish colour. Flowers in July, flowers are about 1cm across, yellow, in clusters of 5-10, with a sweet smell. They have a distinct wing like bract at the base of the flower stalk. Fruit is spherical and about 5mm across. Smooth grey bark when young developing cracks and flakes as it ages.

**Confusion Species:** The related Large-leaved Lime *Tilia platyphyllos* and the hybrid Common Lime *Tilia X europaea* look similar but generally have larger leaves without the orange hairs. The side veins on the leaf of Small-leaved Lime are not prominent like the Large-leaved and Common. In terms of their uses all three species are interchangeable.

**Edible Uses:** The young leaves when soft and pale green can be eaten raw or used as a wrapper for food fillings. The flowers can be used fresh or dried as a tea or a flavouring. The sugary sap can be tapped.

**Medicinal Uses:** A tea from the flowers relieves stress and tension, boosts the immune system and lowers cholesterol.

**Other Uses:** The inner bark or bast layer is one of the best sources of material for making cordage, removed in spring it requires retting in water for several weeks to separate the individual layers. The wood is soft and light and is excellent for carving. The seasoned wood makes an excellent hearth for friction fire lighting and can be used with the bow drill, hand drill and fire plough methods.









**References:**

Addison, Josephine & Hillhouse, Cherry. "*Treasury of Tree Lore*" (Andre Deutsch Ltd, 1999)

Bruton-Seal, Julie & Seal, Matthew. "*Hedgerow Medicine*" (Merlin Unwin Books, 2008)

Irving, Miles. "*The Forager Handbook*" (Ebury Press, 2009)

Phillips, Roger. "*Trees in Britain, Europe & North America*" (Macmillan Reference, 1978)

Rose, Francis. "*The Wild Flower Key*" (Frederick Warne, 1981)