

Ligustrum spp., Privet

There are about 50 different *Ligustrum* species, all native to Europe, North Africa, and Asia. The species is shade and drought tolerant, so it easily spreads into various habitats. This plant can often be found in fields, woodlands, forest edges, or roadsides. These dense thickets of the Privet plants can greatly outcompete native vegetation and decrease biodiversity in infested areas. In addition, the berries on all of the Privet species are toxic to humans, with symptoms including headache, nausea, abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting, weakness, and low blood pressure and body temperature.

Description: This plant can grow up to 25 feet tall, with smooth, light gray/tannish bark. Leaves are a glossy green color and are arranged oppositely. These leaves are elliptical shaped with a blunt point at the tip. This plant produces quite a lot of leaves, which enhances its ability to shade out native vegetation.

Control: Manual pulling of the plant may be used on smaller infestations. With mechanical removals, it is important for all root parts to be dug up to prevent re-sprouting. Mowing will control the spread and limit the growth, but isn't guaranteed to locally eradicate populations.

Look-alikes: Similar looking species include various bush honeysuckles (*Lonicera spp.*) and the native coralberry (*Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*). The bark and flowers of the Privet are a good way to distinguish from these species,

Flower Time and Description: Flowers begin to show in in the early summer, with berries appearing by the fall. The small white flowers form clusters at the end of the branches. In the fall months, dark blue berries are present.

