

Small (Narrow) Leaf Privet

Local Priority Weed

Under the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015, all landholders have a "General Biosecurity Duty" to manage any "Biosecurity Risk" posed or likely to be posed by Priority Weeds. These weeds can impact on human health, the economy, the liveability of our City and the environment. Impacts can include allergies and other health issues, costs of control, loss of tourism value, degradation of natural landscapes, parks and recreation facilities, reduction of useful agricultural land and loss of primary production, loss of biodiversity and water quality.

MANDATORY OUTCOME

The plant should be fully and continuously suppressed and destroyed.

Scientific name

Ligustrum sinense

(Family: Oleaceae)

Description

Habit: A branching, densely leafed, evergreen shrub to small tree up to 5m. Stems are woody and are light brown.

Leaves: Oval leaves are 2 cm to 5cm long, most with wavy edges and end in a pointed tip.

Flowers: Flowering late spring to summer. Privet produces abundant small, white, and strongly scented tubular flowers produced in clusters.

Fruit: The fruit is a green, oval berry that matures to blue-black in winter.



Photo source: Royal Botanic Gardens, Domain Trust



Photo source: A Hunt



Photo source: P Christmas

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Dispersal

One plant can produce up to a million seeds. Seed is spread by fruit-eating birds, and is also washed down waterways. The plant can also layer and sucker.

Impacts

The plant is usually found in moist, nutrient rich sites such as gullies where it grows densely. Once the fast-growing seedlings establish, Privet's, fibrous root systems deprives native plants of nutrients and moisture. The ability to block out light prevents germination of native seeds.

Current distribution

Whole of the Blue Mountains Local Government Area.

Control

- Seedlings can be hand pulled if all of the roots can be removed.
- Seedling beds can be sprayed with a selective herbicide. Ensure preparation around native plants before spraying.
- More established plants will need to be cut and painted using herbicide.
- Larger plants can be stem injected.

Because the berries are bird spread, it is best to treat plants before they fruit.

If planning a staged removal of privets in order to avoid erosion (for example, along a creek bank), the main stem can be cut but NOT poisoned. This keeps the root system alive to hold the soil while new plantings can be established and also prevents further seeding. Cut the stem about 1 metre high. A cut lower than 1 metre will promote multi-stem growth.



Hand Removal



Cut and Paint



Stem Inject

Plant this instead

Grey Myrtle, Long-leaved Lomatia, Swamp Baeckia or Woolly Tea Tree.

Control illustrations by Virginia Bear.



NEW SOUTH WALES
WEEDS ACTION PROGRAM

For more information on weed identification, control methods, herbicide use and weed contractors see:
Blue Mountains City Council - Bushland Operations Team | <http://www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/weeds> | Phone: 4780 5000

BLUE MOUNTAINS - NO PLACE FOR WEEDS