

Ligustrum sinense

COMMON NAMES

Chinese privet

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Shrub or small tree to approx. 5m high, evergreen, or semi-deciduous in cold districts. Shoots densely hairy. Petioles to 5mm long, hairy. Lamina 2.5~6 x 1.25~2.5cm, elliptic or elliptic-oblong, dull green above, hairy on midrib beneath and usu. above in lower part, ciliolate when young; base broad-cuneate; apex usu. obtuse. Panicles to around 10cm long, rather loose; branches densely hairy, somewhat flattened, generally angular; pedicels short. Bracts and bracteoles linear to oblong, caducous. Flowers very fragrant. Calyx 1~2mm long, glabrous or nearly so; lobes very shallow. Corolla white; tube 1.5~2mm long, slightly > calyx; lobes about 3mm long, elliptic-ovate, spreading, subacute. Stamens = or slightly < corolla lobes; anthers pinkish-mauve or purple. Style exerted. Fruit 4~6mm diam., globose or subglobose, dull- or purplish-black. Seed 3~4mm long, oblong, shallowly grooved. (- Webb et. al., 1988)

SIMILAR TAXA

A shrub or small tree to 5 m high, evergreen or semi-deciduous with densely hairy shoots (Department of Conservation 1996). Leaf stalks are hairy, leaves are dull green above, hairy on the midrib below and oval (up to 6 cm) (Department of Conservation 1996). The plant has panicles of small white flowers (Department of Conservation 1996), fragrant (Anon., 1997: Pestfacts 49, ARC). The fruit is 6 mm in diameter and dull black (Department of Conservation 1996). It looks a bit like putaputaweta (Department of Conservation 1996).

HABITAT

Terrestrial. A plant of coastal and lowland habitats (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). The plant occurs in sites of low-high fertility (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). A plant of scrub and forest margin, roadsides, fencelines, open forest communities (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). Communities in which the plant occurs are alluvial forest remnants, wastelands, shrublands, open stream systems and coastal areas (Department of Conservation 1996).

GENUS

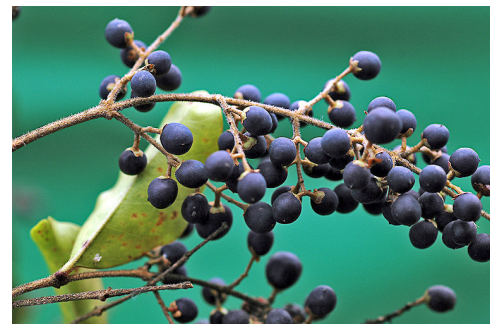
Ligustrum

FAMILY

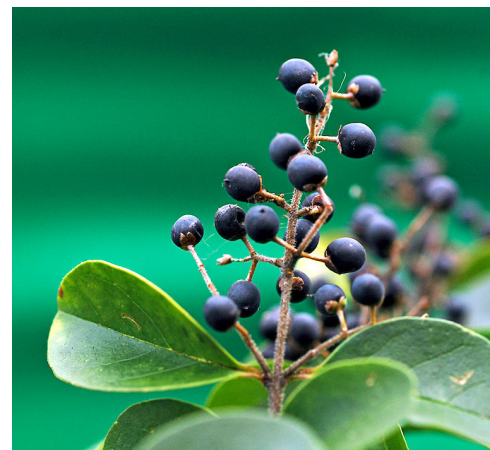
Oleaceae

AUTHORITY

Ligustrum sinense Lour.



Note puberulent stems. Whanganui. Jun 2011. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Whanganui. Jun 2011. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

July, August, September, October, November, December, January, February, March

YEAR NATURALISED

1950

ORIGIN

China

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

TOLERANCES

The plant is highly tolerant to shade; tolerant to drought; slightly tolerant to poor drainage (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). The plant tolerates clay soil (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). Requires low to high soil fertility (Atkinson 1997).

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. The flower is bisexual; reproduces by seed (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). Seeds may remain viable up to 6 months under 4dC refrigeration (ibid.). Gravity and vertebrates disperse seed (ibid.)

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).

POISONOUS PLANT

Poisonous purplish-black berries.

ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC. 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

NVS CODE

LIGSIN

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ligustrum-sinense/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026