

# **PRIVET** (Ligustrum vulgare)

Privet can invade riparian areas, roadsides, fields, forest understories, and many other spaces where native plants would normally be found. It can outcompete native plants, which normally provide food and cover to wildlife. Because of its ability to adapt to and tolerate a variety of conditions, the plant has spread widely throughout the U.S. Privet is poisonous to horses and most pets.

Preserving Our Land & Water



# **CHARACTERISTICS**

Also known as common privet or European privet, it is a semi-evergreen shrub or small tree that can grow up to 20 feet in height. Leaves are opposite, lanceolate (oblong), usually measuring 1-3 inches long, and 1/2-inch wide. Flowering occurs from April to June, when creamy white flowers develop in clusters. Abundant fruits ripen to a dark purple to black color and persist into winter. Seeds are usually spread by birds and other wildlife that eat the fruit. Privet is commonly used as an ornamental shrub, often in hedgerows.

### WHERE FROM

Originally native to Europe and Northern Africa, European privet was introduced to North America sometime during the 1700s.



PRIVET FOLIAGE Nava Tabak, Invasive Plant Atlas of New England, Bugwood.org

### WHERE FOUND

Privet is currently found in at least 35 states, including Pennsylvania. It is able to tolerate a variety of growing conditions and can be found in fields, fence rows, roadsides, forest understories, and areas along rivers or streams. It is commonly planted in residential areas as a landscaping shrub or for privacy hedgerows.



PRIVET FLOWERS The Dow Gardens Archive, Dow Gardens, Bugwood.org



PRIVET EARLY IN SEASON Bugwood.org

# CHEMICAL METHOD

In spring or summer, cut the plant as closely to the ground as possible and apply glyphosate (e.g., Roundup) to the cut stumps. Reapplication may be necessary. In the late fall or winter, use a foliar application of Garlon 3A or glyphosate.

# MANUAL METHOD

Cutting or mowing privet to the ground may help slow and control the spread of the plant, but will not eradicate it. Instead, be sure to dig out and remove all of the roots to ensure privet will not grow back.

When removing, be careful not to remove or destroy desirable species.

# REPLANT

Do not plant privet. Instead, consider using native alternatives in landscaped areas such as: gray or alternate-leaved dogwood, arrowwood, or blackhaw viburnum.

(Read and follow all herbicide labels carefully before use.)

U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, Plant Conservation Alliance (www.nps.gov/plants)U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, National Agricultural Library (www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov)
The Nature Conservancy (www.tnc.org)
Pennsylvania Dept. of Conservation of Natural Resources (www.dcnr.state.pa.us)