

SMALL-LEAVED PRIVET

Ligustrum sinense

TREE

Family Lauraceae

Origin China

Description Lightly hairy, densely branched shrub that grows to 4 m high⁶. A widely naturalized woody weed species especially common on rainforest margins and along fence lines in cleared areas³. This species is present along the entire NSW coast particularly on the central and north coast where it is a large problem in moist gullies and rainforest where there is nutrient enrichment².

Stems/Leaves Small branches with white lenticels (pores within the stem where gaseous exchange takes place). Small elliptic to ovate shaped leaves, entire margins, acuminate apex and cuneate to rounded base³.

Flowers A dense flower head consisting of branched panicles. The fragrant flower has four white petals flowering from late winter to spring³. The tree only flowers if it is in the sun⁸.

Fruit/Seed Black ovoid (egg shaped) berry approximately 5 mm long³. The seed is spread by birds and water⁴. This species is suspected of being poisonous and known to cause hayfever in humans⁶.

Root system Tap and lateral root system. Coppices and suckers from large roots near the surface⁸.

Removal techniques

Manual Seedlings can be removed by hand. Loosen the soil with a long handled garden fork. Pull the seedling up slowly by taking hold of it at the base. For plants with a trunk diameter of around 5 cm cut off all branches and leave a metre of stump for leverage. Using a mattock chop into the lateral roots about 10 cm away from the trunk. Lever the roots with the mattock whilst levering the trunk with a free hand. After removing the trunk lever the remaining lateral roots to expose as much of the root as possible. Removing these roots will reduce the chance of suckers appearing²¹. Ensure that all seed heads are removed⁸.

Chemical Chemical controls are available. Spray the weed, especially seedling regrowth with glyphosate at a ratio of 1:100 with surfactant. For mature plants cut stump, drill or axe cut and apply undiluted glyphosate²².

Notes

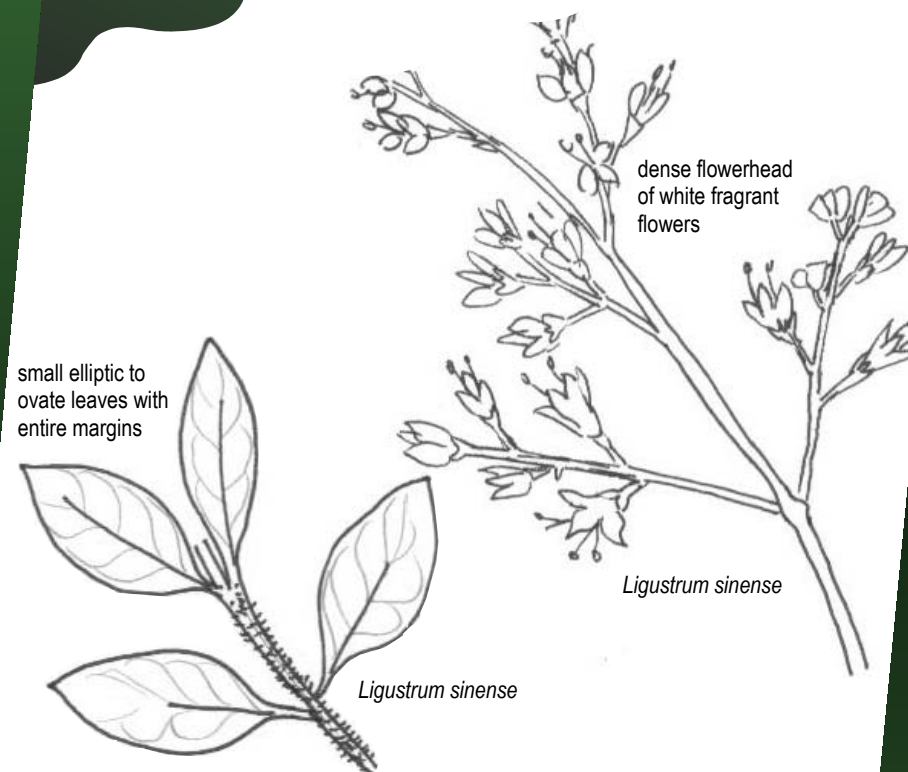
The tree regenerates after fire coppicing and suckering⁸.

This species can tolerate low light conditions such as under the canopy of *Pittosporum undulatum*⁸.

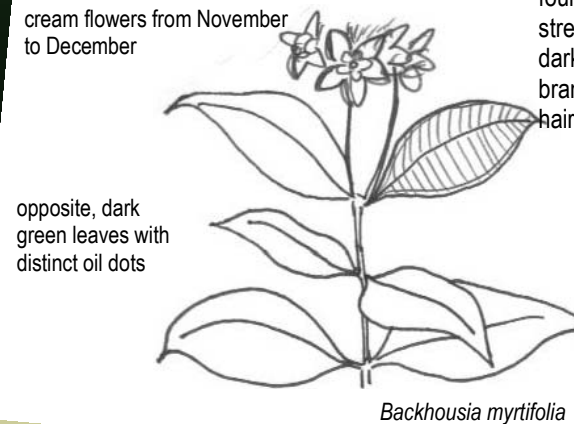
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**Similar native species**

cream flowers from November to December



Grey Myrtle (*Backhousia myrtifolia*): A spreading shrub up to 4 m high found in dense colonies beside streams and sheltered gullies. Dull dark green foliage and the young branches are covered with fine grey hairs. Cream coloured flowers⁹.

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