

Tree Privet

Ligustrum lucidum

**Total Control Plant under the
West Coast Regional Pest Plant
Management Strategy**



**Suspected sightings of this Total Control Plant should be reported promptly to
the West Coast Regional Council or DOC Conservancy Office, Hokitika**

National Pest Plant Accord Status

Tree Privet is listed on the 2008 National Pest Plant Accord and is banned from sale, propagation and distribution in New Zealand. For more information refer to MAF Biosecurity New Zealand, www.biosecurity.govt.nz/nppa

Where does Tree Privet come from?

Tree Privet, and its near relative Chinese Privet (*Ligustrum sinense*) are both native to China. They were originally introduced into New Zealand as ornamental and hedging plants. By the 1950's both plants had escaped home gardens to spread throughout most parts of New Zealand although Tree Privet has not yet gained a hold on the West Coast. This makes it possible to eradicate it here, hence it being listed for total control.



Top Right: Tree Privet on a hillside replaces native bush
Above: Left - Chinese Privet; Right - Tree Privet [ARC]

What does Tree Privet look like?

To ensure sightings reported to WCRC or DOC are of Tree Privet and not the related Chinese Privet, the key differences are as follows.

Tree Privet grows as a small to medium size evergreen tree with large, dark green, glossy leaves. It flowers from Jan - March and has strongly scented, small cream flowers.

Chinese Privet grows as a densely branched large evergreen shrub to small tree with smaller, more dull and lighter green leaves than Tree Privet. It flowers from Sept - Dec and has strongly scented small white flowers.

Both plants develop dark purple berries post flowering which are attractive to birds.

Why is Tree Privet a Pest Plant?

Tree Privet, and also Chinese Privet, are both considered pest plants because of their ability to form dense stands along bush margins to the detriment of native species. Seeds are readily spread by birds eating the berries and both plants are tolerant of a wide range of conditions from damp and shady to dry and sunny.

Many people also have allergic reactions, such as hayfever and skin irritation, to pollen from the strongly scented flowers of both species and the leaves and berries are also toxic. If consumed they can cause vomiting and strong abdominal discomfort.

What are the best methods of control?

Where Tree or/and Chinese Privet are growing amongst other plants that you wish to retain, a mix of manual and herbicide methods maybe necessary. More than one herbicide application may be needed to ensure there is no regrowth from cut stumps or roots. Hedges of either species, and shrubs up to 3m can be trimmed periodically to minimise flowering and seeding.

Manual Methods

Pull up small seedlings and cut down larger plants, ensuring all roots are dug out. Dispose of all parts of plants carefully, ensuring any berries go to landfill.

Herbicide Methods

- For medium to larger shrubs use STUMP TREATMENT where the woody stems are cut back and a herbicide gel, e.g. Vigilant, is applied to the cut surface area.
- For larger trees use CUT AND INJECT where shallow cuts are made around the trunk of the tree with a machete or hatchet and then filled with herbicide gel. An alternative is to DRILL A HOLE and fill with herbicide gel.
- For smaller to medium sized shrubs/trees use a SPRAY, preferably with a penetrant. To get maximum benefit this needs doing to ALL leafy surfaces during the active growing season.

Herbicides suitable for Privet control include those containing the active ingredient 'glyphosate' (Roundup, Watkins Weedkiller etc), Escort and Tordon Brushkiller.

For personal safety please use all herbicides as per manufacturer's labelling

Biocontrols

There are no known biological controls for Tree Privet (or Chinese Privet) at this stage.

Where can I get more help?

For further information call either of the Regional Weedbusters Co-ordinators. They are:

Mary Traves: Environmental Information Officer, West Coast Regional Council (768 0466 or 0508 800 118)

Tom Belton: Technical Support Officer Biosecurity & Weeds, Department of Conservation, West Coast - Tai Poutini Conservancy, Hokitika (03 756 9100)



www.weedbusters.org.nz

The West Coast Regional Council does not accept liability for any advice given on this sheet regarding application of herbicides for pest plant control. The brand names listed imply neither endorsement of those brands, nor criticism of any other brands not listed.