Small leaf or Chinese privet  
*Ligustrum sinense*

Small leaf privet has been widely distributed in Australia as a garden hedge plant. Its berries are eaten by birds; aiding its dispersal. In natural areas, the densely branched growth habit of this weed poses a significant shading threat to native plants in moist, temperate areas of South East Queensland.

Over time, this exclusion of native plants may be detrimental to native animals. Stands of this weed may also grow sufficiently thick to hinder animal movement through the bushland. Small leaf privet produces masses of heavily-scented white flowers that cause severe allergic reactions in susceptible people.

**Description**

Small leaf privet is a large shrub growing to about 4m tall. The finely-haired leaves are deep green in colour, oval-shaped and up to 5cm long. Young branches are often covered in fine hairs like those found on the leaves. Cream-coloured flowers are very small, but produced in dense sprays up to 10cm long. Berries are produced after the flowers and are dark blue to black in colour.

**Management**

Small plants may be hand-pulled and moist soil will make this task easier. Be careful not to break the tap root or the plant will regrow.

If you would like further information on the small leaf privet see the A–Z Listing of Weeds at [Queensland Government Website.](http://www.qld.gov.au)

**Reference:** Land Protection (Invasive Plants and Animals), 2007, “PP94, Weed Busters Fact Sheet”, the State of Queensland, Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries.