Privet

*(Ligustrum species)*

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**Summary:**
- **Foliage:** Deciduous broadleaf
- **Height:** 4 to 15 feet
- **Spread:** 4 to 8 feet
- **Shape:** Bushy
- Small, green, summer foliage. When unpruned, pyramidal clusters of small white flowers produce black berries.

**Plant Needs:**
- **Zone:** 3 to 8
- **Light:** Partial shade to full sun
- **Moisture:** Wet to moist
- **Soil Type:** Sandy, loam, or clay
- **pH Range:** 3.7 to 7.0

**Functions:**
- Suggested uses for this plant include hedge, screen, and border.

**Planting Notes:**
- Bare-root plants transplant easily.
- Tolerates all but very wet soil conditions.
- Does well in dry soil. Tolerates wide range of soil pH.
- Tolerates smoke and grime of cities.

**Care:**
- Prune after flowering.
- Tolerates severe pruning, including shearing.
- Prune hedges so that base is wider than top.

**Problems:**
- Despite their susceptibility to a variety of insects and diseases, privets generally do well and rarely require spraying.
  - Many privets species have become invasive and are therefore not suitable as landscape plants.
  - Ask your local Extension agent if a particular *Ligustrum* is appropriate for landscape use.

**Alternatives:**
- Consult local sources, including historic or public gardens and arboreta, regarding cultivars and species that are suitable for your area.
- In lieu of potentially invasive *Ligustrum*, consider holly (*Ilex*) species and cultivars as alternatives.

**Comments:**
- Privets are most often grown as hedge plants because they are so easy to grow.
- There are many other plants which make more attractive hedges.
- The fruit on unsheared specimens lasts throughout the winter and provides food for birds.

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