

# Blunt-Leaved / Boarder Privet

## Ligustrum obtusifolium

### Fact Sheet

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Common Name: Blunt-leaved privet / Boarder privet  
New Hampshire Invasive Species Status: Prohibited (Agr 3800)

Latin Name: *Ligustrum obtusifolium*  
Native to: Asia



Elliptical leaves (summer)



Blunt-leaved privet – Rye, NH



leaves (summer)



Flowers (spring)



Fleshy fruits-Drupes (late summer)



Seeds (fall)



Form (summer)



Branching and leaf habit (summer)



Fall foliage (autumn)

**Description:** Shrub reaching 12' tall by 10-12' wide. **Stems:** Greenish, smooth. **Leaves:** Opposite, simple and elliptic, 1-3" long by half as wide, blunt tipped, light green. **Flowers:** Small white panicles, May to early June. **Fruit:** Small blackish drupe. **Zone:** 4-7. **Habitat:** Prefers dry upland soils, full sun to heavy shade, pH adaptable. **Spread:** Seeds dispersed by birds. **Comments:** Becomes established in natural areas leading to competition and displacement of native species. **Controls:** Hand or mechanical removal, cutting, herbicide applications such as foliar or cut-stem.

### General Considerations

*Ligustrum obtusifolium*, referred to as either Blunt-leaved privet or Boarder privet, is a medium sized deciduous shrub in the olive (Oleaceae) family. Its leaves are opposite, simple, oblong, 1 to 2 inches long, dark green above and lighter below with a rounded or blunt tip and base. It has short white flowers in nodding panicles, which are very fragrant, but unpleasant appearing in early summer. The fruit is dull blackish-purple drupe about ¼" in diameter that ripens in the fall and often persists into the following spring. Each fruit contains 1-4 seeds. The bark is grayish brown, somewhat smooth and covered with short, light colored lenticels. Distinguished from other privets by its minutely fuzzy twigs, by its hairy leaf midrib, and by its flower clusters which are about 1 to 2 inches in length

It tolerates a wide variety of growing conditions from wet to dry sites, mineral to organic soils, high pH to basic and partial shade to full sun. However it does best in full sun, which allows it to produce seed when it's 3-years old. The typical shape or habit is wide spreading with numerous sprouts. Like most invasive plants it too leaves out early in the spring and retains its foliage late in the fall. The longer growing season allows it to outcompete and suppress many native plants. Seed dispersal is mainly from frugivorous birds feeding on the fruits, flying away and excreting the seeds. *Ligustrum obtusifolium* grows readily from seed or from root and stump sprouts.

The foliage can be toxic to herbivorous mammals while both the foliage and berries are toxic to humans.

## Control Options

See the following control guides: [Integrated Pest Management \(IPM\) for Woody Plants](#); or the [Control of Invasive Species by Numbers](#)

<i>Ligustrum obtusifolium</i> Blunt-Leaved / Boarder Privet	
Plant Type	Shrub
Habitat Type	Forests, fields, roadsides, floodplains
USDA Hardiness Zone	4-7
Rooting Structure	Fibrous
Environmental Impacts	Displacing native plants
Wildlife Impacts	Toxic to mammals, loss of valuable habitat
Leaf arrangement	Alternate, simple
NWI Ranking	?
Soil Type	Sandy or loamy based soils
Soil pH Range	5.5-8
Light Requirements	Full sun to part shade
Growing Season	
Growth Rate	Medium
Mature Height	12 ft. (4 m)
Life Span	?
Reproductive Age	3-5 years
Flowering Period	June
Flower Type	Dioecious
Pollination	Open-pollinated - insects
Seed Set	September
Seed Per Plant	?
Scarification Required	No
Cold Stratification	Yes
Seed Longevity	?
Seed Germination Rate	57%-92%
Seedling Density	?
Other Propagules	Suckering
Dispersal Vectors	Bird, small mammals, fruit dropping

## Sources

Illinois Wildflowers:

[http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/trees/plants/boarder\\_privet.html](http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/trees/plants/boarder_privet.html)

Invasives.org:

<http://www.invasive.org/browse/subinfo.cfm?sub=10087>

Missouri Botanical garden:

<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=c322>