Japanese Privet  
*Ligustrum japonicum*

**Plant:** A thicket-forming shrub with a spreading canopy up to 6 m (20 ft) tall. (Similar to Chinese privet except larger.)

**Stem:** Round, bark light gray and smooth with no fissures. Branches brownish gray with raised light dots (*lenticels*), twigs pale green (sometimes reddish) to gray, not hairy.

**Leaves:** Evergreen. leathery, opposite, ovate, 5–10 cm (2–4 in) long and 2.5–4 cm (1–1 3/4 in) wide. Tip sharp, black-green above and light green below, often with reddish margins. *Petioles* 1–2 cm (3/8–3/4 in) long.

**Flowers:** April-June. Loosely branching, conical clusters. terminal and upper axillary. White, 4-petaled, fragrant.

**Fruit and Seeds:** September–February. A blue-black drupe, 6 10 mm (1/4–3/8 in) long and 5 mm (1/8 in) wide.
Range: Locally abundant, Louisiana to Florida, northeast to North Carolina and northwest to Tennessee.

Ecology: Introduced into the U.S. as an ornamental shrub and now escaped in scattered locations.

Author and photos by Dr. James H. Miller, Southern Research Station.