

*Ligustrum lucidum*

[Synonyms : *Esquirolia sinensis*, *Ligustrum compactum* var. *latifolium*, *Ligustrum esquirolii*, *Ligustrum japonicum macrophyllum*, *Ligustrum lucidum* var. *esquirolii*, *Ligustrum magnaefolium*, *Ligustrum magnoliifolium*, *Ligustrum sinense latifolium robustum*, *Ligustrum spicatum*]

**GLOSSY PRIVET** is an invasive evergreen shrub or tree. Native to China and Korea it has tiny, fragrant, creamy-white flowers.

It is also known as Chinese privet, Chinese wax-leaved privet, *Chinesischer Liguster* (German), *Glänzender Liguster* (German), Glossy tree privet, *Nepal Liguster* (German), Nepal privet, *Nu zhen zi* (Chinese), *Ptačí zob lesklý* (Czech), Shining privet, Tree privet, Wax-leaf privet, and White wax tree.

A wax is produced on the branches and this is collected commercially in China.

Warning – the berries are considered poisonous.

*Lucidum* is Latin (glossy, shining, bright, clear, transparent).

In some parts of Asia it was believed that the glossy bluish-black berries will encourage longevity.

Beyond anything else however in their native habitat in China the leaves are of especial economic importance as they (of only two host plants) have long provided food for a particular wax-producing insect.

It was introduced to Britain in about 1794 by the famous English botanist, Sir Joseph Banks (1744-1820). In southern Europe glossy privet is a common sight on the streets.

The wood has been used locally for making walking sticks and umbrella handles and with this end in mind the Chinese have cultivated glossy privet in appropriate shapes.

Medicinally, the fruit have been used in Chinese medicine for the treatment of rheumatism.

(First known records of their medicinal use in China are believed to be about 1000 years old.)