

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Ligustrum sinense – SMALL-LEAF CHINESE PRIVET, DECIDUOUS PRIVET [Oleaceae]

Ligustrum sinense Lour., SMALL-LEAF CHINESE PRIVET, DECIDUOUS PRIVET. Large shrub, winter-deciduous, with spreading principal branches and branchlets, in range to 500 cm long; shoots with only cauline leaves, branches and branchlets mostly 2-dimensional (plagiotropic), upper surfaces of foliage appearing glabrous. **Stems:** having internodes slightly compressed and projecting pairs of hemicylindric leaf bases, tannish, conspicuously short-hairy with straight hairs mixed with hairs curving upward of different lengths. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, petiolate, without stipules; petiole often twisted, channeled, < 2–7 mm long, with swollen oil glands, short-hairy; blade elliptic to slightly ovate, 13–63 × 10–23 mm, tapered to broadly tapered at base, entire, obtuse to somewhat rounded often with minute point at tip (remotely mucronate) at tip, pinnately veined with principal veins somewhat sunken on upper surface and only midrib raised on lower surface, inconspicuously short hairy (scattered puberulent) but most obvious along midrib especially on lower surface, stomates slightly sunken, lower surface with some soil glands along midrib. **Inflorescence:** racemelike (panicle), leafy, axillary (terminal) < leaf, ± ovoid, in range inflorescence with to 8 nodes of opposite decussate axillary axes with opposite decussate pedicels, the lowest lateral branch to 20 mm long and sometimes have the first node with a raceme, lateral branches having to 6 nodes and to 20-flowered and lateral branches decreasing upward, terminal flower of raceme opening before subterminal flowers; bract of lateral branch = cauline leaf, with petiole cupping peduncle; peduncle of raceme to 3 mm long, peduncle and rachis short-hairy with unequal nonglandular hairs; bracts subtending each node along raceme (pedicels) leaflike with short petiole and having a diminutive, narrowly ovate blade, 2–3 mm long, green or with narrow white margins, surfaces short-hairy; bractlet subtending pedicel awl-shaped, ca. 1 mm long, minutely ciliate on margins; pedicel spreading (of terminal flower ascending), at anthesis 0.8–1.3 mm long increasing 2× in fruit, pale green, puberulent. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 6–7 mm across; sweetly fragrant; **calyx** shallowly (3–)4-lobed (toothed or remotely so) and crownlike, 1.2–2 mm long, whitish, in range glabrous; tube bell-shaped, 1–1.5 mm wide; teeth deltate to minute, short–0.4 mm long, margin sometimes with several minute papillae or inconspicuous serrulations; **corolla** (3–)4(–5)-lobed, ca. 5 mm long, white, glabrous; tube bell-shaped, ca. 1.5 × 1.2 mm and slightly > calyx; lobes in bud cupped around anther and at anthesis widely spreading and mostly cupping to the lower side, equal to subequal, oblong to elliptic and broadly acute, 3–3.5 × (0.9–)1.1–1.8 mm, veins inconspicuous; **stamens** 2–3, fused to top of corolla tube, exserted; filaments ascending to spreading, cylindrical or broader and flattened front-to-back, 2.2–3.9 mm, white, glabrous; anthers dorsifixed and often oriented horizontally, dithecal, in range 1.7–1.8 mm long, pink aging darker, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pinkish; **pistil** 1, ± 3 mm long, exserted; ovary superior, broadly obovoid, ca. 0.5 × 0.8 mm, pale green, glabrous, 1-chambered with 4 ovules; **nectary** on top of ovary; style erect, 2-branched, axis cylindrical, 1.5–1.8 mm long, white, glabrous, the stigmatic branches appressed, fleshy and together appearing club-shaped, 0.7–0.8 × 0.4–0.45 mm, white. **Fruit:** drupe, 1-stoned, spheroid, 5–7 × 4.5–6 mm, dull purplish blue appearing somewhat glaucous; exocarp, thin, minutely textured; pulp (mesocarp) mealy, colorless; endocarp broadly ellipsoid, 4–6.2 × 3–4.2 × 2.5–3.2

mm, black (thickened cell walls) and textured with domed brown cells; calyx appressed to fruit, often split to base.

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