



BIOSECURITY ALERT

MYRTLE RUST *Austropuccinia psidii*

HELP SLOW THE SPREAD OF MYRTLE RUST

Myrtle rust is a fungus that can have serious effects on a number of New Zealand's native trees, including pohutukawa, manuka, rata, ramarama and swamp maire, as well as some production trees such as eucalyptus (gum).

It has been found on Raoul Island in the Kermadec group north of New Zealand, and also in Northland, Waikato, Taranaki and Te Puke. It's thought it has blown here from Australia where it is widespread.

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) and the Department of Conservation (DOC) are working to try to contain it and protect New Zealand's unique native and taonga species. Please keep your eyes out for its distinctive signs and report anything suspicious to MPI on **0800 80 99 66**.

If you believe you have come into contact with it, prevent it spreading by washing clothing and equipment.

ABOUT MYRTLE RUST

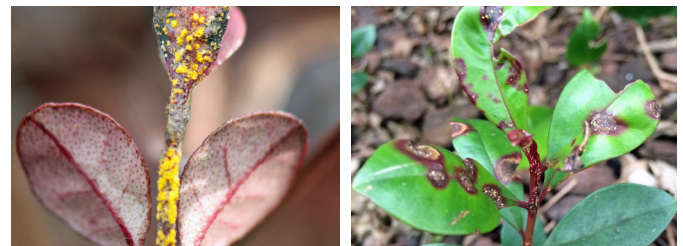
Myrtle rust attacks soft new growth including shoots, leaves, buds, flowers and fruit. It can affect seed development. Repeated infections of this fungal disease can kill the plant.

Symptoms to look out for on plants from the myrtle family are:

- » Bright yellow powdery eruptions appearing on leaves and stems
- » brown/grey rust pustules (older spores) on older infected areas
- » Some leaves may become buckled or twisted and die off.

WHAT'S AT RISK?

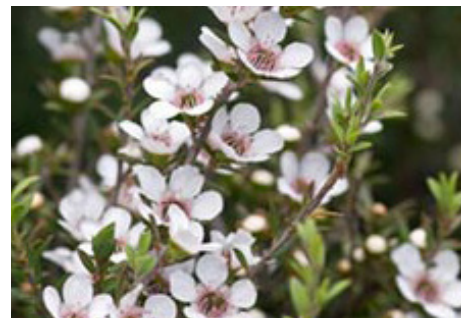
All myrtle family plants, with the exception of feijoa, are at risk. This means some iconic native species could be threatened and also some economic species such as manuka (affecting the manuka honey industry) and eucalyptus. Some of the more common myrtle plants you may recognise are:



Pohutukawa



Eucalyptus (gum)



Manuka



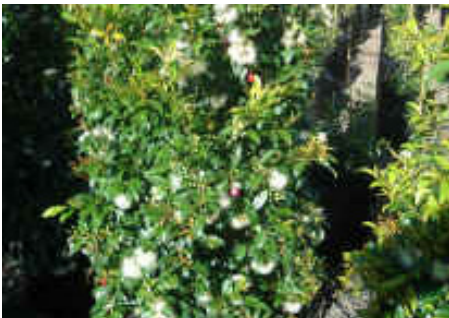
Bottlebrush



Ramarama (Iophomyrtus)



Rata



Lilly Pilly



Kanuka

HOW YOU CAN HELP

If you think you've spotted myrtle rust:

- » Don't touch the plant or the infected area – this could spread the tiny spores which are fine like talcum powder.
- » Take a photo – of both the powdery patches and the plant itself.
- » Take careful note of the site so you can find it again. Mark it if possible with tape, ribbon, rope etc.
- » Phone MPI's hotline **0800 80 99 66**.

Remember, myrtle rust can be moved about on clothing and equipment. If you've been exposed to myrtle rust in your garden or in the wild, please wash your clothes on a hot wash as soon as possible. Wash down any equipment that's come into contact with the fungus, before moving to another location.

WWW.MPI.GOV.T.NZ/MYRTLERUST

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