

Myrtle Rust- Disease Identification Guide

Myrtle rust only infects Myrtaceae plants

- Rust pathogens that infect non-Myrtaceae plants are not myrtle rust.
- There are no other rust pathogens on Myrtaceae plants in New Zealand.
- Myrtle rust (*Austropuccinia psidii*) is also known as guava rust and eucalyptus rust. Myrtle rust only affects plants in the myrtle family. The Myrtle family (family *Myrtaceae*) includes:
 - Manauka
 - Kanuka
 - Rata
 - Pahutakawa
 - Bottle brush
 - Gum trees (Eucalypts)
 - Tea tree
 - Guava
 - Feijoa
 - Lilly pilly
 - Juniper myrtle
 - Many others

Symptoms

- Myrtle rust mainly affects young actively growing leaves, shoots, epicormics, flowers, and fruit.
- Typical symptoms on a susceptible plant host are the distinctive **bright yellow/orange rust pustules** on purple, brown, or grey lesions.
- Leaves may become buckled or twisted, necrotic and finally drop from the stem.
- See photos over.

What to do if you suspect Myrtle Rust

- don't touch it
- members of the public are encouraged to report new observations of myrtle rust. If people suspect they have found the disease they are advised not to touch it, but to photograph it and submit clear photos of both the host plant and the symptoms – labelled as myrtle rust to [iNaturalist NZ](https://www.inaturalist.org), where experts can check and confirm whether the observations of the host and the disease are correct.

If myrtle rust is positively identified, follow the following to remove affected plants or parts of plants:

- [How to remove myrtle rust infected plants](#)

Prevention

Based on Australian, Hawaiian and Brazilian work, MPI have included azoxystrobin as being effective against myrtle rust infections.

- Apply **Kiwicare [PLANThealth Spectrum](#)** at 14-21 day intervals to susceptible plants.
- For smaller areas **[PLANThealth Fungus Control](#)** ready to use can be used.
- **Kiwicare [PLANThealth Buxus Blight Buster](#)** is also likely to be protectant against Myrtle rust.



Myrtle rust symptoms on Myrtaceae plants



Figures 1-6. Myrtle rust on **1.** Eucalyptus; **2.** Pohutukawa; (Pictures 1-2 and 7-19: courtesy of MPI) **3-6.** Kermadec pohutukawa. (Figures 3-6: Pictures courtesy of Department of Conservation)

Myrtaceae plants with symptoms that are NOT caused by myrtle rust



Non-Myrtaceae plants with symptoms that are like those caused by myrtle rust

