

Lining up the MYRTLE RUST defence!

July 2022

Myrtle rust (*Austropuccinia psidii*) is an introduced and highly invasive fungal disease of Myrtaceae plants, including peppermint trees, Geraldton wax, eucalypts, melaleuca, bottlebrushes and lilly pilly.

To stop the spread of myrtle rust in WA, we are asking everyone to be vigilant and keep an eye out for symptoms of this exotic disease.



EARLY DETECTION IS KEY TO PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF MYRTLE RUST.

KNOW what to look for, **KNOW** what to do, **KNOW** how to report.



What to look for

Myrtle rust attacks young plants and new growth on established plants in the Myrtaceae family. This family of plants dominate many major WA ecosystems including more than 1800 species in the south-west. More than half of Australia's Myrtaceae species occur in WA.

Symptoms of myrtle rust infection include:

- Masses of bright yellow or orange-yellow spores.
- Lesions on young, actively-growing foliage, as well as floral buds and young fruits.
- Rust lesions on plant species such as bottlebrush are purple in colour and sometimes spores are dark brown.
- Buckled or twisted leaves.

What to do to prevent incursion and spread

Myrtle rust spores are abundant and spread mostly via wind, but they can also be spread via infected plant material, contaminated equipment, vehicles and clothing – even skin and hair.

Any activity in natural areas has the potential to spread myrtle rust, including bushwalking, cycling, weeding, revegetation, and camping.

When entering bushland areas, arrive clean, leave clean!

- Ensure items are free of mud, soil and organic matter before entering and exiting bushland.
- Use wash-down and boot cleaning stations if available.
- Launder and disinfect all items on your return home.
- Always stay on roads and trails.



DON'T TOUCH IT, REPORT IT

If you suspect plant material is showing symptoms of myrtle rust do not touch it or collect samples. Take clear photos of the whole plant, affected area and lesions. Immediately report your sighting to the Pest and Disease Information Service.



Report your observations

MyPestGuide® Reporter
via app or online
mypestguide.agric.wa.gov.au

Pest and Disease Information Service
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