

Myrtle rust



In the last meeting, Athol referred us to the Myrtle rust fungal disease...



*Myrtle rust is a serious fungal disease and part of the eucalyptus/ guava rust complex. This group of pathogens infect plants belonging to the Myrtaceae family including Australian natives like bottle brush (*Callistemon*), tea tree (*Melaleuca*) and eucalypts.*

The disease can cause deformation of leaves, heavy defoliation of branches, die back, stunted growth and plant death. The rust poses no threat to human or animal health.

Myrtle rust was first detected in SE Queensland in December 2010. Under Queensland legislation authorities must be notified of all plants suspected of being infected with myrtle rust.

What does myrtle rust look like?

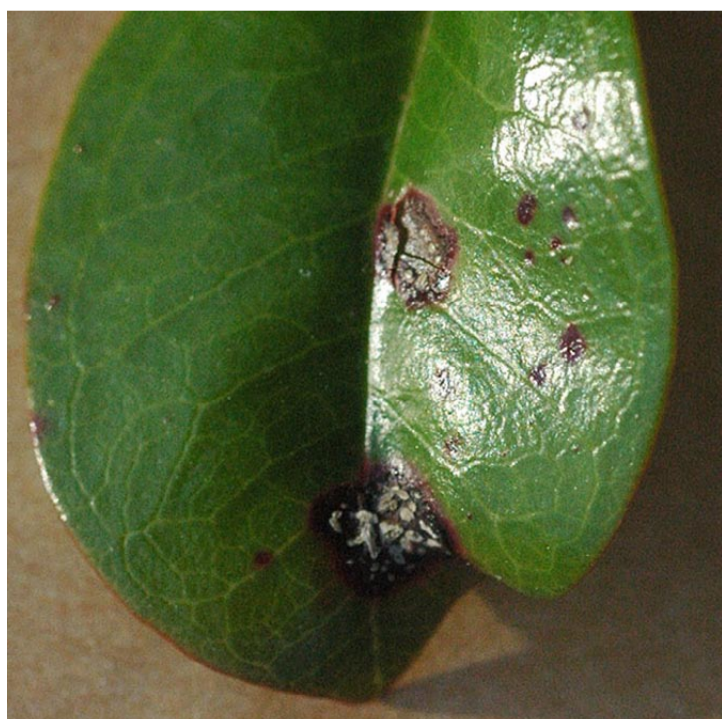
Myrtle rust attacks leaves of susceptible hosts. First signs of infection are tiny raised pustules on infected leaves. After a few days these pustules turn an egg-yolk yellow colour.

What do I do if I see myrtle rust?

Do not move any infected plant material to avoid spreading the disease, and report the location immediately to:

Biosecurity Queensland
www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au
Phone 13 25 23

Exotic Plant Pest Hot line
Phone 1800 084 881



**Valley
Bees**

Myrtle rust has been found in Australia in the following plants :

Acmena sp. (lilly pilly)

Agonis flexuosa (willow myrtle) 'Afterdark', 'Burgundy', 'Jeddas Dream'

Austromyrtus inophloia (see *Gossia inophloia*)

Backhousia citriodora (lemon-scented myrtle)

Backhousia myrtifolia (grey myrtle)

Callistemon viminalis (weeping bottlebrush)

Callistemon salignus (willow bottlebrush)

Callistemon 'St Mary MacKillop'

Chamelaucium uncinatum (Geraldton wax)

Choricarpia leptopetala (brown myrtle or rusty turpentine)

Eucalyptus agglomerata (blue-leaved stringybark)

Eucalyptus deanei (mountain blue gum or Deane's gum)

Eucalyptus pilularis (blackbutt)

Gossia inophloia 'Aurora' and 'Blushing Beauty' (syn. *Austromyrtus inophloia*)

Leptospermum rotundifolium (round-leaved tea tree)

Lophomyrtus bullata 'Rainbow's End'

Lophomyrtus x ralphii 'Red Dragon', 'Black Stallion', 'Krinkly'

Melaleuca quinquenervia (broad-leaved paperbark)

Melaleuca linariifolia 'Claret tops'

Metrosideros collina 'Tahiti' and 'Fiji'

Rhodamnia rubescens (scrub turpentine)

Rhodomyrtus psidioides (native guava)

Syncarpia glomulifera (turpentine)

Syzygium australe 'Meridian Midget'

Syzygium jambos (rose apple)

Syzygium luehmannii (small-leaved lilly pilly, riberry)

Syzygium luehmannii x *Syzygium wilsonii* 'Cascade' (lilly pilly)

Tristania neriifolia (water gum)

Xanthostemon chrysanthus (golden penda)

How does myrtle rust spread?

Myrtle rust is spread by very small spores carried by wind, bees and/or birds. The disease can also be spread through the movement of

- **infected plant material such as seeds, nursery stock and germplasm.**
- **spores on timber, wood packaging and dunnage.**
- **contaminated freight containers.**
- **people carrying spores on clothing, shoes, equipment and other personal effects.**

How quickly does myrtle rust spread?

Depending on environmental conditions, the disease can spread rapidly when carried on plant material, by people, vehicles, wind or by bees and birds.

