

Host plants

Plants in the Myrtaceae family are susceptible to the disease. The following list is indicative and it is important to report if you suspect myrtle rust on any other species not listed below.

Susceptible species

Beach cherry (*Eugenia reiwarttiata*)

Black stallion (*Lophomyrtus bullata*)

Bottlebrush (*Callistemon* spp.)

Common myrtle (*Myrtus communis*)

Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp., *Angophora* spp., *Corymbia* spp.)

Geraldton wax flower (*Chamelaucium uncinatum*)

Lemon myrtle (*Backhousia citriodora*)

Lilly pillly (*Syzygium* spp.)

Paperbark (*Melaleuca* spp.)

Tea tree (*Leptospermum* spp.)

Turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera*)

Water gum (*Tristanis neriifolia*)

Willow myrtle (*Agonis flexuosa*)



Yellow pustules caused by myrtle rust

Steven Conaway, Greenwich Land Trust, Bugwood.org

MYRTLE RUST

Information guide



Queensland
Government

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment

**IF YOU SEE ANYTHING UNUSUAL,
CALL THE EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE**

1800 084 881

Prepared by Plant Health Australia and the National Forest Biosecurity Program, with funding provided through the *Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper*, the government's plan for stronger farmers and a stronger economy.



About myrtle rust

Myrtle rust affects more than 400 species in the Myrtaceae family.

The disease is caused by the rust fungus *Austropuccinia psidii*, which results in damage to juvenile foliage, stems, flowers and fruit. The fungus kills susceptible species.

The pathogen originated in South America and was first identified in Australia in 2010. It is now widespread along Australia's east coast from southern NSW to northern Queensland. It has also been reported in parts of Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

It is easily spread by wind-borne spores and also via the movement of spores on plants, people and equipment.



Close up of uredospores

Geoff Pegg, QDAF



Symptoms on *Eugenia reinwardtiana*

Geoff Pegg, QDAF

Signs, symptoms and appearance

Young, soft, actively growing leaves, shoots and stems are more susceptible to the disease than more mature plant tissues.

The disease starts as small purple spots on leaves which develop yellow pustules within the purple spots. The yellow pustules fade and become grey over time.

Leaf distortion and rapid death of new growing tips and other soft material occurs in more susceptible species or when infection levels are high, resulting in defoliation. Whole plant death may occur in highly susceptible hosts, including mature trees, saplings and seedlings. Infection of flowers and fruits has been reported for a range of species.

Symptoms are most easily looked for during periods of growth (flush) and ideally inspected on a fortnightly basis during this time.



Symptoms typically start as purple spots that develop yellow pustules

Geoff Pegg, QDAF

Reporting suspect sightings

If suspect symptoms are seen do not attempt to collect samples but:

1. make a note of the location
2. take a photo
3. report through the MyPestGuide mobile application (agric.wa.gov.au/pests-weeds-diseases/mypestguide)
4. if required follow instructions on how to collect or send samples.



Symptoms caused by myrtle rust infection

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