

Lining up the MYRTLE RUST defence!

September 2020

Myrtle rust (*Austropuccinia psidii*) is an introduced and highly invasive fungal disease of Myrtaceae plants, including eucalypts, bottlebrushes, paperbarks and peppermint trees. It has now been found in all Australian states **except** Western Australia and South Australia.

To keep WA free of myrtle rust, we are calling on wildflower and bushland enthusiasts to keep an eye out for myrtle rust as they head out into bushland areas.



EARLY DETECTION IS KEY TO PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF MYRTLE RUST SHOULD IT ARRIVE IN WA.

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 bottlebrush, paperbark, peppermint, and iconic eucalypts such as jarrah, karri, tuart and wandoo. More than half of Australia's Myrtaceae species occur in WA, with more than 1800 in the south-west.

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.



Report your observations



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

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