

Kia ora !



**Restore
Hibiscus & Bays**
Ngahere Tupu Tonu • Thriving Nature

A volunteer has noticed a plant disease on your property called myrtle rust

Myrtle rust is a plant disease that is having a devastating effect across Auckland's North Shore. It is caused by the fungus *Austropuccinia psidii*, which affects hundreds species in the plant family Myrtaceae (myrtles) worldwide, and is having a severe impact on some of our natives, particularly ramarama, rōhutu, swamp maire and pōhutukawa and exotics including lilly pilly and guava.

Myrtle rust produces bright yellow powder-like spores on the leaves that can be easily spread through direct contact or by the wind. New growth and soft tissue on the host tree or shrub are destroyed, eventually killing the plant.

The disease has been seen in the following area(s):

The popular hedging plant lilly pilly is often affected and acts as a reservoir for the disease. There are many alternative hedging plants available. By choosing a native alternative you will also be providing food sources for native birds and insects.

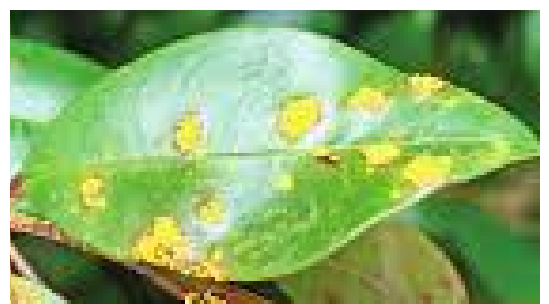
A range of alternatives are listed here:

www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/environment/plants-animals/protect-trees-disease/Pages/planting-to-prevent-myrtle-rust.aspx

Identifying myrtle rust

The key indicator for an active infection is a bright yellow (or orange-yellow) powdery eruption on the leaves, starting on the underside.

Note: This indicator on non-myrtaceous plants is not a sign of the disease. Landcare Research has an excellent guide to identifying myrtles.



What can you do?

Check the Myrtaceae plants in your backyard for this disease.

Remove the affected plants – extra care is needed not to spread the disease more widely during the removal process.

- Remove affected plants on a day with no wind – this reduces the chance of the spores being carried to other plants.
- Dispose of infected plant waste by putting in plastic bags and sending to landfill. Burning infected plant waste risks the spores spreading to new areas with the smoke.
- Sterilise tools and equipment with methylated spirits or 5–10 per cent bleach after use. Wash exposed clothing in hot water.

Stay up to date with all things myrtle rust by following Beyond Myrtle Rust on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook

Fungicide sprays (eg Yates Fungus Fighter) can be used to help reduce infection and spore production, but they do not cure the disease, need to be used frequently to be effective are are ecotoxic.

Reduce risk of myrtle rust in your back yard by making sure plants you buy are free from this disease. Prune myrtles in late autumn /early winter to encourage new growth over winter when myrtle rust is inactive rather than during spring / summer when myrtle rust spores are more likely to infect.

Talk to your neighbours, tell them about myrtle rust and encourage them to take action too

Restore Hibiscus and Bays operates a FREE tool library.

We can lend you herbicide gel and handsaws to tackle a range of ecological weeds.

Visit our website for further information:
restorehb.org.nz/resources-tool-library/ or email us:
info@restorehb.org.nz

If we can help with further support and advice on control of myrtle rust or any environmental weeds, please visit our website: restorehb.org.nz/resources-pest-plants/ or email us: pestplants@restorehb.org.nz