

Myrtle Rust Tangata Whenua Update – 1 June 2017 5:00pm

<p>For information about this update, contact MR2017 Liaison@mpi.govt.nz</p>	<p>This update includes key information from the daily situation reports (SITREPs) from both MPI and DOC. Blue text below indicates new information (based on 31 May update).</p>
<p>Background</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myrtle rust was confirmed in New Zealand (in a Kerikeri plant nursery) on 3 May 2017. • Myrtle rust was confirmed in New Plymouth on 17 May.
<p>Situation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPI has confirmed two additional positive finds in Taranaki infected with myrtle rust. • There are 32 confirmed myrtle rust finds: Taranaki (27), Northland (3) and Waikato (2). The 14 most recent finds of myrtle rust since 27 May have been in Taranaki, 12 of which were on private properties in New Plymouth. • The affected sites include private (18) nursery (8), retailer (1), depot (1), orchard (1), golf course (1) public (1) and commercial (1). • The plant species that myrtle rust has been detected on include: Lophomyrtus (15), Metrosideros (15), Syzygium (2), Leptospermum (1) and Eucalyptus (1). They include Pōhutukawa (Metrosideros excelsa), Metrosideros sp., Eucalyptus (Eucalyptus sp.) Ramarama (Lophomyrtus bullata); Myrtle (Lophomyrtus sp.), Ramarama (Lophomyrtus bullata), Mānuka (Leptospermum scoparium) and Monkey Apple (Syzygium smithii). Myrtle rust has not been confirmed on feijoa. List of plants susceptible to myrtle rust [PDF, 550 KB] • While most infections are on seedlings, more recent detections were in established pōhutukawa. • Discussions on compensation were held in Kerikeri and New Plymouth this week. A Waikato Tainui hui was held in Hamilton today.
<p>Incident Control</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based in Wellington, MPI is acting as the lead agency for the response with support from other central and local government agencies, industry and tangata whenua. • Local coordination is based at the DOC Bay of Islands office in Kerikeri; in New Plymouth, local coordination has been set up at the Taranaki Emergency Management Office, 45 Robe St New Plymouth (including Waikato operations). • The MPI Response Team has established a Welfare Team to assist people and businesses applying for financial compensation for losses incurred as a result of actions taken under the Biosecurity Act.
<p>Operations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of potentially affected plants from Kerikeri has been completed. • Staff from MPI, DOC and the Northland, Taranaki and Waikato local and regional councils continue to carry out surveillance around confirmed properties, set up controls and apply fungicide treatment. • In Kerikeri, activities continue to focus on returning the two infected sites back to business. Kerikeri Plant Production Ltd re-opened today for selling non-myrtaceous plants.
<p>Intelligence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have any questions about the response, you can contact MPI at the following email address: MR2017_Intel@mpi.govt.nz.
<p>Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of long term planning options continues. • Manawhenua are working with DOC to collect seeds of taonga Myrtaceae species. The aim is to conserve the biodiversity of native Myrtaceae in New Zealand.

Information for gardeners, Arbor Day planting, and walkers/trampers.

For those of you out and about in the long weekend, continue to keep a look out for symptoms of myrtle rust and report suspected myrtle rust to MPI.

If you're planting:

- Know your plants and those that are affected by myrtle rust. This serious fungal disease only affects plants in the myrtle family which includes pōhutukawa, mānuka, kanuka, ramarama, and feijoa.
[What is a myrtle?](#) [PDF, 550 KB]
- If you want or need to plant myrtle species, seek advice from experts when sourcing plants, e.g. from your nursery or supplier.
- Know where your plants come from.
- If you're planting myrtles, keep a record of where you've planted them.
- Keep alert for signs of myrtle rust. Myrtle rust becomes dormant over winter and infected plants may not show symptoms until spring.
- Check new plantings as the weather warms up.
- Myrtle rust primarily affects new plant growth including young shoots, flower buds, leaf surfaces and fruit.
- More detailed information about nursery and plant hygiene is at [NZ Plant Producers Inc](#) website.

Identifying myrtle rust

Symptoms to look out for on myrtle plants are:

- bright yellow powdery eruptions appearing on the underside of the leaf (young infection)
- bright yellow powdery eruptions on both sides of the leaf (mature infection)
- brown/grey rust pustules (older spores) on older lesions.

Some leaves may become buckled or twisted and die off.

If you suspect myrtle rust

Don't touch it or try to collect samples as this may increase the spread of this disease. Myrtle rust is readily spread by wind and can be transported on clothing, vehicles and equipment.

If you suspect myrtle rust:

- take photos e.g. of the whole plant, whole affected leaf and a close-up of the spores/affected area of the plant
- call MPI immediately (0800 80 99 66)
- don't move any plants, produce or gardening equipment offsite until you hear back from MPI.



Brown patches and yellow bumps and typical of myrtle rust.

Advice for specific groups	Refer to our information sheet for specific advice for beekeepers, feijoa growers, other orchardists, nursery owners and home gardeners. Information sheet [PDF, 141 KB]
Find out more	Read the latest updates about myrtle rust: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myrtle rust web page on the MPI website • Read more about myrtle rust • Download the myrtle rust fact sheet [PDF, 409 KB] • Myrtle rust – DOC website
Other information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols for plant producers, production nurseries and garden retailers on managing the risk of myrtle rust can be found on the NZ Plant Producers Incorporated website: http://nzppi.co.nz/ • Partners and stakeholders entering native forests are reminded to ensure they are keeping up hygiene protocols for Kauri dieback disease. These protocols can be found on the Kauri Dieback website: http://www.kauridieback.co.nz/prevention
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next update will be sent out on Friday 2 June. • Please feel free to share this information with anyone you feel will be interested.

Remember, early detection is vital to any attempt to control myrtle rust.

Full information including media updates, pictures and a fact sheet is at:

www.mpi.govt.nz/protection-and-response/responding/alerts/myrtle-rust.

If you believe you have seen myrtle rust on plants in New Zealand:

- Take a clear photo of symptoms and the host plant if possible
- Immediately call MPI on 0800 80 99 66
- Do not attempt to touch the plant as this may aid in the spread of the disease.