July 2019

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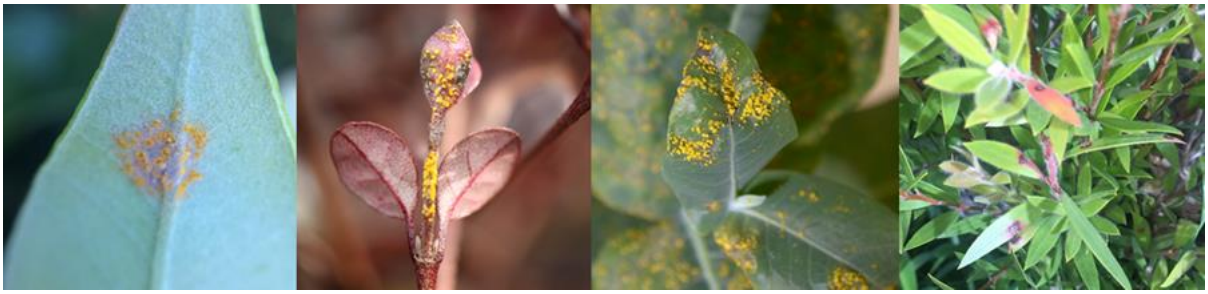


2019 Myrtle Rust Science Symposium - Save the date!

Registrations will open later this month for the 2019 Myrtle Rust Science Symposium, **9-10 September** at the Jet Park Hotel, **Auckland Airport**.

This is a **must-attend event** for everyone who is passionate about safeguarding and sustaining Aotearoa’s precious myrtles for future generations.

Join us to discuss research progress, updates on management approaches, insights, learnings and new developments, and how we can work together to better understand and limit the impact of this invasive disease.

Who should attend?

Researchers, iwi, central and local government, business and industry organisations, funders, and other key stakeholders committed to reducing the harmful effects of myrtle rust.

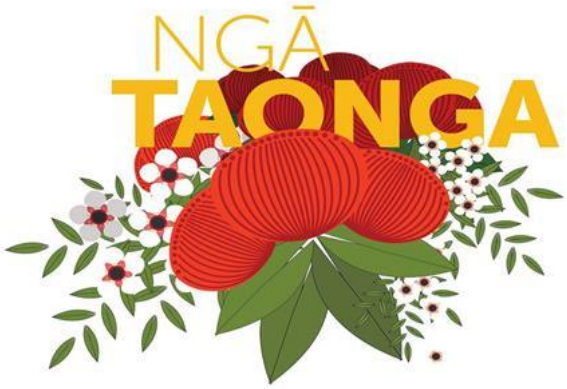
The two-day Symposium is being organised by the Ministry for Primary Industries. Supporters include the Myrtle Rust Strategic Science Advisory Group and Auckland Council.

Are you a potential Symposium Supporter?

If your organisations is interested in financially supporting the symposium, email **myrtlerustnz@mpi.govt.nz** to find out more about the opportunities and benefits.

Symposium updates

Check regularly here for symposium updates, including registration details, the programme and speakers information.



New Myrtle Rust Science Plan vital to combating the disease

The new Myrtle Rust Science Plan will play a vital role in limiting the impact of myrtle rust in New Zealand.

The **science plan** was developed by the Myrtle Rust Strategic Science Advisory Group (SSAG), which is made up of expert scientists across government and industry, and iwi.

Grouped under five themes, the science plan **identifies research priorities** that range from developing novel tools for detection of myrtle rust to disease control and management.

The science plan builds on research already completed or underway, including more than 20 projects identified as priorities by the SSAG and commissioned through the Ministry for Primary Industries, which will be published this year.

Download the Myrtle Rust Science Plan and read more about the SSAG and myrtle rust research on the website.

Department of Conservation seed collection update

All of DOC's seed collecting work has **finished for the year.**

At the start of the project in 2017 we predicted close to **400 myrtaceae seed collections** would be required to preserve the genetics of this family of plants. Every year, however, the remaining seed required for these collections become more difficult to find. The "low hanging fruit" has come from known populations in accessible sites, however now comes the more difficult job of collecting seed from the less common species in the more remote areas.

This year another 45 myrtaceae collections have been sent to the seed bank due to the hard work of DOC rangers and contractors across New Zealand.

To date, **70% of our myrtaceae wish list has been collected** with the majority of these now stored in the New Zealand Indigenous Flora Seed Bank (NZIFSB). The seed bank now has the job of testing the 2019 seed collections to determine the number of seeds predicted to germinate from these collections.

One of our most vulnerable species to myrtle rust, Rohutu (*Lophomyrtus obcordate*) is 80% complete and our iconic Pohutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*) close to 90%.

Heads up for myrtle rust spread in spring

Spring conditions are more favourable for the **spread of myrtle rust**.
The likelihood of infection by myrtle rust is much higher when there is a combination of factors including new plant growth, high humidity, water on the plant surface for more than 6 hours and moderate temperatures around 15–25 °C. When a plant becomes infected with myrtle rust, the disease affects the young, soft, actively growing leaves, shoot tips and young stems.

To avoid stimulating new growth in warm weather it's recommended that you avoid heavy pruning during warm weather if possible. Instead, **prune myrtles** only in late autumn and **early winter**. When pruning, use good hygiene practice, sterilise and disinfect tools and equipment with pure alcohol or methylated spirits to avoid transferring spores.

If you think you see the symptoms of myrtle rust, don't touch it. If you have a camera or mobile phone you can take a photograph and submit it to the **iNaturalist website** where experts can check to confirm whether your identification is correct. A video tutorial on how to make an observation on iNaturalist using the mobile app is available here.

You can also call the MPI Exotic Pest and Disease Hotline on **0800 80 99 66**. For serious incursions on public conservation land you can contact DOC's myrtle rust team at myrtlerust@doc.govt.nz.

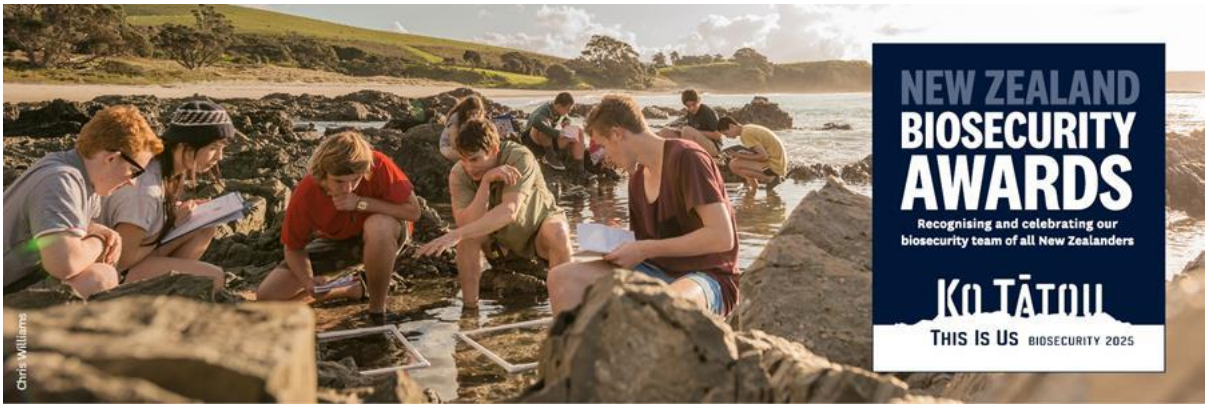
"Myrtles for Tomorrow" symposium

The 2019 conference of the New Zealand Ecological Society (NZES) will take place on 1-5 December at Lincoln University, New Zealand. The 2019 theme is **Ngā Koiora o Konei / Biodiversity Where We Are**.

Sponsored through the "Beyond myrtle rust" project of Manaaki Whenua, a symposium will address the topic of "Myrtles for Tomorrow: Myrtle Rust Research Updates". This symposium is part of the NZES conference and will include first-hand information on myrtle rust research and results.

Abstract to the NZES conference can be submitted until 25 August.
Click here for more information on the conference

Opening call: New Zealand Biosecurity Awards



Do you know an individual, group or biosecurity work that deserves recognition?
This is your chance to help their achievements be recognised and celebrated.

Nominations for the New Zealand Biosecurity Awards include nine categories. Be in quick, entries close on **24 July 2019**.
Find out more about the biosecurity awards here.

What's new on www.myrtlerust.org.nz

Did you know that all of the videos on myrtlerust.org now have **te reo captions** options? To access them, simply start the video, go to settings and select Maori in the Subtitles/CC options.

Two key documents have been added this month: the **New Zealand Myrtle rust Strategy 2019-2023** and the **Myrtle Rust Science Plan**. The Science and Research page has also been updated.

The future of the newsletter

Due to Biosecurity New Zealand's Myrtle Rust Programme finishing at the end of June 2019, this will be the last myrtle rust stakeholder update for the foreseeable future.

However this does not mean that work stops. MPI will continue to lead on science and research into myrtle rust. DOC will continue its seed collection work and encourages you to continue reporting myrtle rust infections.

All the latest news, science and research will be uploaded to the myrtle rust website. Please continue to visit the website to keep up to date with the latest news.

Resources and further information

About myrtle rust:

All myrtle rust resources found on the myrtlerust.org.nz

Biosecurity New Zealand myrtle rust page

DOC myrtle rust page

Identification resources

Some other handy resources include:

- The New Zealand Plant Conservation Network
- Definition of the myrtle genus from Encylcopedia Britannica
- Landcare Research Plant Identification and Interactive Keys
- iNaturalist

Radio New Zealands 'Our Changing World' podcast on myrtle rust research

Read the story or listen to the full podcast here

Ko Tātou This Is Us
BIOSECURITY 2025

Biosecurity New Zealand
Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua

Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

This information is compiled by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) and the Department of Conservation (DOC).

For information about this update, contact MyrtlerustNZ@mpi.govt.nz

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