What is Myrtle Rust?

Posted by Dane Pickering - 05 May 2011 19:46

Myrtle Rust (*Uredo rangelii*) is a newly described fungus that is closely related to the Eucalyptus/Guava rusts. These rusts are serious pathogens which affect plants belonging to the family Myrtaceae including Australian natives like bottle brush (Callistemon spp.), tea tree (Melaleuca spp.) and eucalypts (Eucalyptus spp.).

Myrtle Rust is distinctive in that it produces masses of powdery bright yellow or orange-yellow spores on infected plant parts. It infects leaves of susceptible plants producing spore-filled lesions on young actively growing leaves, shoots, flower buds and fruits. Leaves may become buckled or twisted and may die as a result of infection. Sometimes these infected spots are surrounded by a purple ring. Older lesions may contain dark brown spores. Infection on highly susceptible plants may result in plant death.

Information taken from the DPI website (www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/plant/myrtle-rust)

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