



# Beyond Myrtle Rust

## Towards Ecosystem Resilience

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Manaaki Whenua  
Landcare Research



# Myrtle Rust: the problem

- Disease caused by a fungus (*Austropuccinia psidii*)
- A South/Central American native, likely blew in from Australia in 2017
- Attacks myrtles (plants in Myrtaceae family), especially new growth. Potentially fatal.
- In NZ, 24 host species infected so far, including ramarama, mānuka, pōhutukawa, rātā, swamp mairie



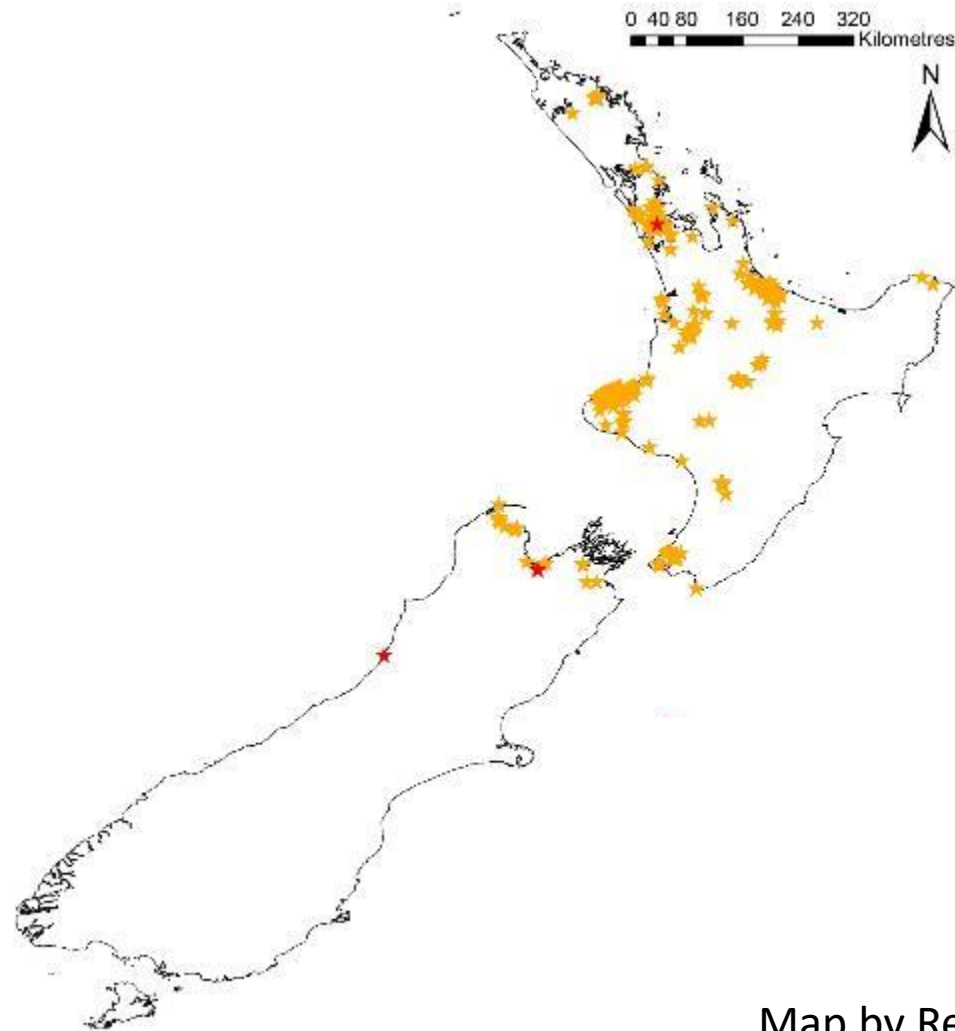
Eric McKenzie



Roanne Sutherland

# Myrtle Rust: current distribution

*As of May 2019*



- ★ MR found in May 2019
- ★ MR found before May 2019

# Myrtle Rust: the research approach



- **Understand fungal behaviour and host relationships**  
(pathogen dynamics)

- *Focus on sexual reproduction*



Stuart Fraser



Alistair McTaggart

- **Track what happens to invaded environments**  
(ecosystem impacts)

- *Measure ecosystem responses (e.g. microbiota, nutrient fluxes)*



Gwen Grelet



Maj Padamsee

- **Develop control tools**  
(novel mitigation technologies)

- *Study host resistance in manuka*   - *Look for microbial 'defence' agents*



Grant Smith

- **Māori engagement**  
(Kaitiakitanga and Māori-led solutions)

- *Facilitate leadership, and develop Māori-led methods for ecosystem resilience*



Alby Marsh



# Myrtle Rust: how can you help?

- Monitoring programme extending from this 'season'
  - Spring through Autumn
- Got some time and a tree/site?
  - complete a monitoring form (avail. from September)
- Want to record a single observation?
  - iNaturalist NZ is the way



Peter de Lange



Roanne Sutherland

# Myrtle Rust Science Symposium



- September 9, 10, Jet Park Hotel, Auckland Airport
- Research presentations and strategy discussions
- See [www.myrtlerust.org](http://www.myrtlerust.org)

The screenshot shows the website for the Myrtle Rust Science Symposium. At the top, the logo reads "MYRTLE RUST in New Zealand". A navigation menu includes "Myrtle rust", "Identify it", "Report it", "How you can help", "Training", and "Science & Research". A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main heading is "Myrtle Rust Science Symposium". Below this, a breadcrumb trail reads "Home / Science & Research / Myrtle Rust Science Symposium". On the left, a vertical menu lists: "Investment in research", "Myrtle Rust Science Plan", "Myrtle Rust Science Symposium", "MPI Research projects", "Research partners", and "Strategic Science Advisory Group members". The central content area features the heading "Registrations are open!" above a graphic of red myrtle berries with the text "NGA TAONGA". Below the graphic, the text reads: "Register now for the 2019 Myrtle Rust Science Symposium, 9-10 September, Jet Park Hotel, Auckland Airport. Discuss the latest research progress and what it means in the real world. Find out what's happening on the ground and what organisations managing myrtle rust want from the science. Make connections and have your say on what needs to happen now. Read here the media release and Questions & Answers (Q&A) about the Symposium and new Myrtle Rust Science Plan."

Want to talk more?  
Get involved?  
Get in touch!

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