

Indigenous responses to native plant species impacted on by the arrival of new diseases.

A.T Marsh, 1, H.T. Ropata, 2, N.W. Waipara, 2.

1The New Zealand Institute for Plant & Food Research Limited, Private Bag 11600, Palmerston North

2The New Zealand Institute for Plant & Food Research Limited, Private Bag 92169, Auckland

Corresponding author: alby.marsh@plantandfood.co.nz

Myrtle rust, caused by the pathogen *Austropuccinia psidii* is a recent arrival to New Zealand and is one disease impacting on indigenous species around the Pacific. Originally from Central and South America (Glen et al. 2007), it has been moving steadily around the world infecting Hawaii in April 2005, Australia and New Caledonia in 2016 and New Zealand in May 2017.

In New Zealand, Myrtle rust infects tree species that the indigenous Māori peoples consider important cultural treasures (Ropata 2017). New Zealand myrtaceae have many traditional Māori uses ranging from medicine, construction and food, having significant cultural value (Teulon et al. 2016). Māori now consider these plants taonga (treasured entities) Taonga include tangible things such as land, waters, plants, wildlife and cultural works, and intangible things such as language, identity and culture, including Mātauranga Māori (Traditional Māori knowledge).

Indigenous worldviews and concerns around the impacts of myrtle rust are currently underrepresented in literature. Apart from a short paragraph on the threat to Hawai'ian indigenous culture Loope (2010), there is no other literature citations on the impact of *P. psidii* to Australian Aboriginal or other Pacific Island communities and culture.

This work is important to both the indigenous and scientific communities interested in learning from one another through the sharing of knowledge, both traditional and modern.

Key words.

Myrtle Rust

Indigenous

taonga

traditional

Pacific Islands

culture