

# Black mudfish

## *Neochanna diversus*

Native

At Risk

Declining

Photos: Mike Lake, Waikato Regional Council

Black mudfish are non-migratory and spawn in the area they live (they do not have a sea going lifestage). These fish generally inhabit peat wetlands and slow flowing drains. Black mudfish are found only in the Waikato and Northland. The drainage of 75% of the Waikato regions wetlands has greatly contributed to their decline due to habitat loss.

Black mudfish have the amazing ability to aestivate (hibernating for the summer). They can survive in areas that dry out over summer by finding a damp area i.e. under a log. They seem to prefer these habitats that dry out over summer, possibly to avoid eels and *Gambusia* (mosquitofish).

Black mudfish are nocturnal hiding during the day and feeding at night in invertebrates. This species has no scales (so oxygen can diffuse through the skin when aestivating) and are believed to live up to about 10 years old. The common adult size of black mudfish is 160mm.

