

# Bluegill bully

## *Gobiomorphus hubbsi*

Native

Declining

*Photo: Waikato Regional Council*

This species like all bullies is only found in New Zealand. It is highly distinctive with an iridescent blue stripe near the gill opening, hence the name. Bluegill bullies have upturned mouths which allow them to feed on aquatic invertebrates from beneath rocks. They are generally found in fast flowing, loose gravel bed-rivers. Little is known about their spawning habits but it is thought that eggs are laid beneath rocks which are guarded by the males. Larvae are carried downstream to sea after hatching where they spend a few months before returning again to freshwater to mature.

Typically, bluegill bullies reach sizes ranging from 50-60mm. One of the seven species of bully found in NZ, they are considered to be in decline and are not common in the Waikato region with only 3 individuals found in the 2012/13 summer, 2 in 2013/14, 3 in 2014/15, 4 in 2015/16, 1 in 2016/17 and 4 in 2017/18.

