

Freshwater mussel/kākahi

There are two species of freshwater mussel found in the North Island of New Zealand.

Echyridella menziesii

Native

Declining



Menziesii is the more common of the two freshwater mussels in the North Island, which are particularly common in Lake Taupō and Rotorua lakes. It tends to have a rounded shape and curved growth rings. In streams and rivers, this mussel is generally found along stream banks and under cover. It tends to be found in silt and clay substrates. Freshwater mussels are unusual in that they have a juvenile life stage called glochidia when they latch onto and parasitise fish for a short time. This is also thought to help spread juveniles around. Not much is known of where the small juvenile mussels live after that, but it is probably deep in the sediments or in aquatic plant beds. Once the mussels are 30 millimetres long (approximately 3 years old), they begin to be found at the stream bed.

Echyridella aucklandica

Native

Vulnerable



Aucklandica is the less common of the two freshwater mussels, and is primarily found in the north of the North Island. Its top and bottom shells tend to be parallel with straight growth rings. This mussel is generally found along streambanks, under cover, and in silt and clay substrates. Like *Menziesii* mussels, this species goes through the glochidia life stage, latching onto fish for a short period, which spreads juveniles around. Little is known about where juveniles live after that but it is likely deep in the sediment or in aquatic plant beds.

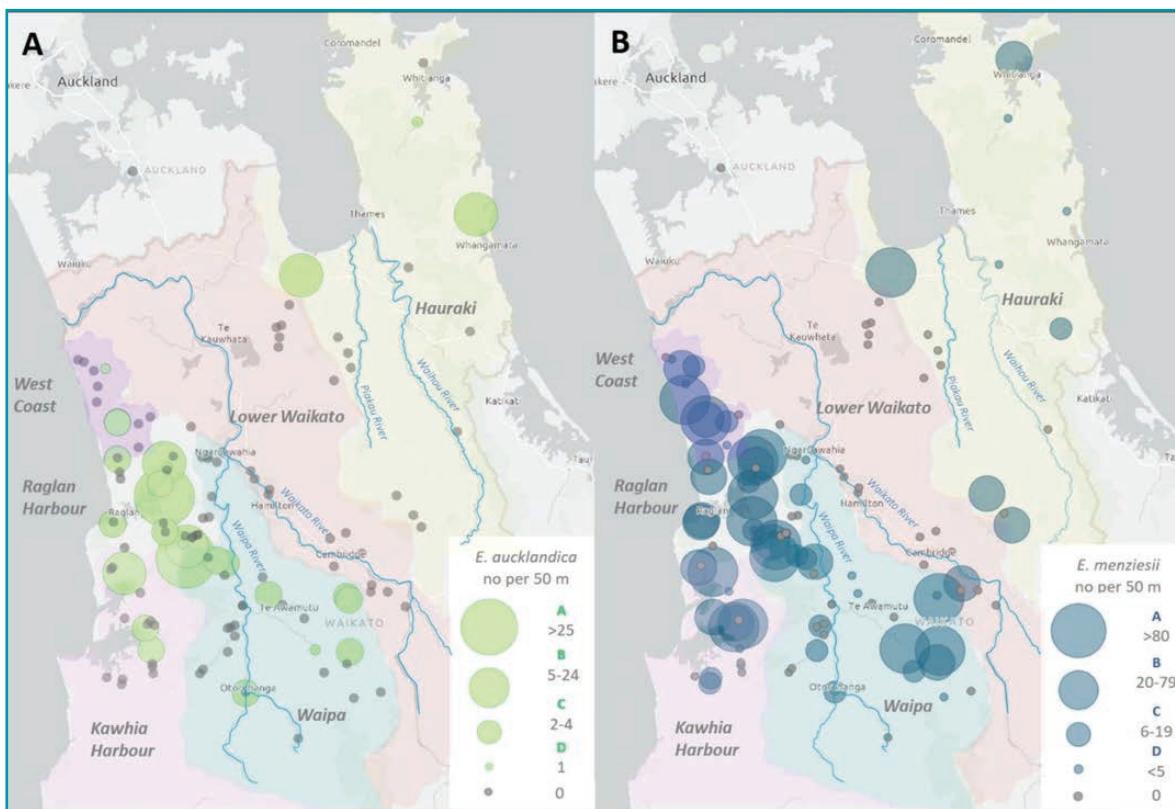


Figure 1. Maps showing *Echyridella aucklandica* (A) and *E. menziesii* (B) densities (individuals per 50 m length) across the six catchments, categorised into species specific density bands (A, B, C, D; see legend) for each site across all survey catchments. Diameter of circles are proportional to the value of density categories. Black circles differentiate from coloured circles to show sites in which mussels were absent (density = 0).