

Inanga

Galaxias maculatus

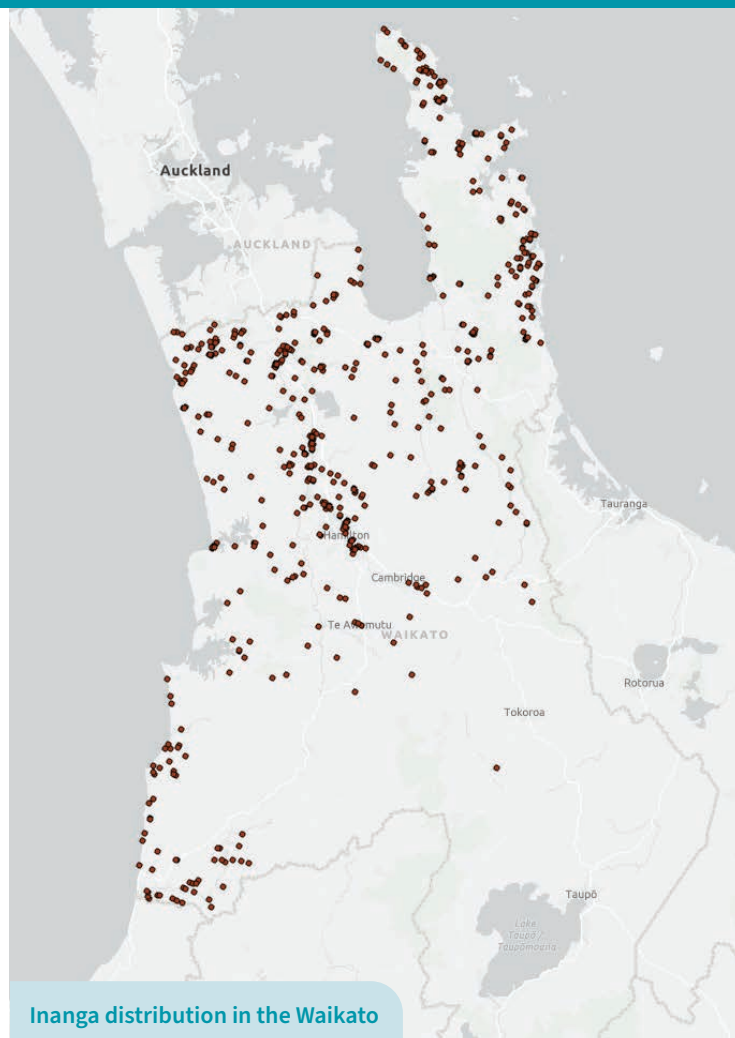
Native

Threatened nationally - Vulnerable

Inanga are native to New Zealand and are the main species in the whitebait run. They are generally found in lowland systems in the Waikato. Adult inanga are the smallest of the whitebait species. During the autumn, inanga move downstream in time to catch the new and full moons and the associated spring tides. At this time, bankside vegetation is submerged and the inanga spawn hundreds to thousands of eggs amongst it. The eggs develop in the humid air and hatch when they become inundated by the next spring tide in the cycle. The hatchlings are swept to sea where they grow for approximately 20 weeks before returning as whitebait.

Inanga can be found also in some parts of Australia, some South Pacific islands and southern areas of South America. You can generally find them shoaling during mid-water in pools near gentle flowing sections of the stream. However, it is possible to find them by themselves and in faster flowing water channels. They are poor climbers so are not found very far inland unless no barriers to their passage are present. Inanga and common smelt are often found together and may be confused, but on closer examination are easy to distinguish as smelt have scales and an adipose fin that inanga lack.

The average lifespan for inanga is one year, although some can live for three years and possibly more. An average sized inanga would measure between 80 and 100 millimetres in length with the longest recorded being 190 millimetres.



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