

Giant bully

Gobiomorphus gobioides

Native

Not threatened

Photo: Bruno David

One of the seven freshwater bully species found only in New Zealand. Lowland rivers and streams appear to be their preferred habitat and therefore they are found at low elevations not far from the sea, including estuaries. Giant bully are nocturnal and are usually found under cover of logs and large rocks during the day and come out to feed at night. Giant bullies can be difficult to tell apart from common bullies but have six spines on their dorsal fin as opposed to common bullies that will have 7 or 8.

Giant bullies are found throughout New Zealand but little is known about their reproduction. It is most likely that they spawn in spring with the larvae carried to sea before returning after a few months to adult habitat. During the 2011/2012 survey across the Waikato we found 1 giant bully, it was over 100 mm long. Four giant bullies were found during the 2016/17 season. They ranged from 116 mm to 141 mm. In the 2017/18 season four giant bullies were found, ranging from 78 mm to 152 mm.

