

River blackfish

Gadopsis marmoratus



Found from the Arthur River in the north-west, along the north coast to Ansons River on the east coast. Introduced populations are present in the Huon and Derwent river catchments. A couple of translocated populations also occur on the West coast of Tasmania.

Description: A long thick bodied fish. The pelvic fins have evolved into a single branched ray. They have long low dorsal and anal fins and very small scales. They have a rounded tail fin.

Colour: Usually dark on the back and sides and covered with regular dark patches and blotches.

Size: Commonly to 450 mm, but up to 750 mm and 5.5 kg.

Habitat: A nocturnal fish that are relatively sedentary, with no apparent migration. They tend to stay on the river bottom where their normal home range is only about 20 metres. They generally inhabit slow flowing sections of streams that are well oxygenated with abundant cover such as snags and boulders.

Diet: They are opportunistic carnivores feeding on a variety of aquatic insects, crustaceans, terrestrial invertebrates and occasionally other fish.

Life Cycle: Their full life cycle is spent in fresh water. Spawning occurs around November. Spawning takes place generally close to instream cover, inside submerged hollow logs where water speed is low. Spawning appears to be temperature dependent. The male will guard the eggs until they hatch. Eggs hatch after 16 days. Newly hatched young remain attached to their egg case until they absorb all of their yolk sac.

Distribution status: Native.

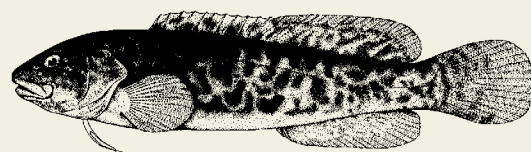
Original range: From Arthur River along the North coast of Tasmania to Ansons River on the East coast.

Reasons for change to distribution: Increased water flows; Extensive stream siltation from erosion; Removal of instream habitat, particularly woody debris; Reductions in water temperatures during spawning seasons. These factors have all contributed to a reduction in range of this species. Translocation to river systems in the South of the state have artificially increased their range.

Legal status: Angling.

Can it be taken? An inland recreational Angling Licence is needed to take river blackfish from inland waters. The daily bag limit is 12 fish with a minimum size limit of 220 mm.

Other names: Freshwater blackfish, marbled river cod.



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