

WHITEBAIT IDENTIFICATION SIMPLE NOTES



How many species are there?

There are 5 true galaxid whitebait species and one smelt species

What are the galaxid species?

In order of decreasing abundance in the whitebait catch in the Bay of Plenty the 5 galaxiid species are:

Inanga (<i>Galaxias maculatus</i>)	
Banded kokopu (<i>Galaxias fasciatus</i>)	Cat C
Koaro (<i>Galaxias brevipinnis</i>) –	Cat C
Giant kokopu (<i>Galaxias argenteus</i>) –	Cat B
Shortjawed kokopu (<i>Galaxias postvectis</i>)	Cat A

Decreasing
abundance in
Bay of Plenty
whitebait catch

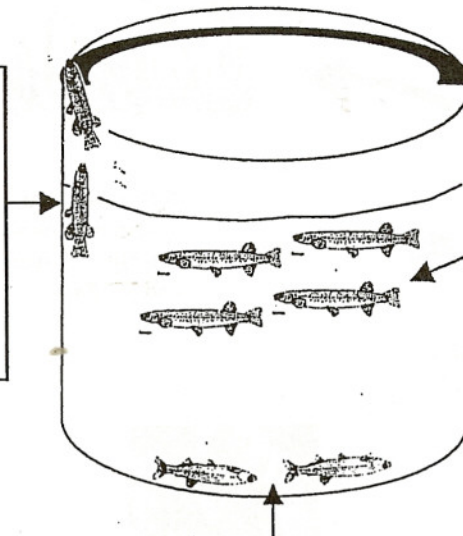
How do I tell the whitebait species apart?

In the bucket?

It is easy to tell the different species apart in the bucket.

If the bucket has had the catch in there for 1/2 and hour or so then look for the following

Koaro, banded kokopu, giant kokopu and shortjawed kokopu, all start to climb out of the bucket up the side walls. You can say "hey look you've got some threatened species in there too"



Inanga
tend to shoal together mid water in the bucket. Some will be starting to tip over and swim sideways after about 1/2 and hour

Common smelt die first in the bucket due to lack of oxygen in the water. They simply slump over and lie on their sides at the bottom of the bucket. Pick some of these up. You will find they have a silvery belly and smell like cucumber. People refer to smelt as second class whitebait or cucumber fish

Out of the bucket:

You can do some basic identification of the three main species outside the bucket as well, using the following key. All pictures courtesy of Bob McDowall

Inanga:

Dorsal and anal fin directly in line with one another, small pectoral and pelvic fins.



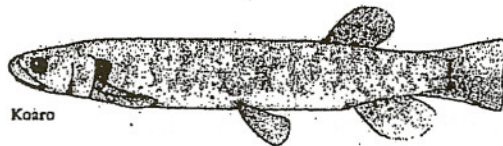
Banded kokopu:

Slightly golden, smaller than inanga, dorsal and anal fin directly in line with each other, large flappy pectoral and pelvic fins.



Koaro.

Dorsal fin and anal fin out of line. Dorsal fin originating forward of anal fin. Large flappy pectoral and pelvic fins.



General life cycle of whitebait

