

'Tis the season

Whitebait can be fished at a particular time of year, but their numbers are in decline so there are some things you need to know to protect them for many years to come.

Season: **1 September–30 October**

What time of day can you whitebait?

Standard time

5am–8pm

Daylight saving time

6am–9pm


Protect stream and river banks


Use the same track in and out. This preserves the banks which are the spawning grounds for the whitebait you're catching.


Seek permission first


If you will be accessing private land to get to the river, make sure you ask the landowner for permission first.

Contact us

 consent.enquiries@orc.govt.nz

 0800 474 082
03 474 0827

 Otago Regional Council
Private Bag 1954
Dunedin 9054

 www.orc.govt.nz/consents

Whitebaiting in Otago

What you need to know

Season: 1 September–30 October





Whitebait numbers are in decline
so take only what you need and make
sure you protect their habitat so there
are plenty more to catch in the future.

What is ORC's role in whitebaiting?

ORC's main interest is in whitebait stands to ensure they don't interfere with our flood management infrastructure.

Whitebait stands are a permitted activity and **only** on the Clutha River/Mata-Au or its branches, but need resource consent everywhere else in Otago.

Please note:

A deposit is required with resource consent applications. Flood Protection Bylaw approval may also be required.

The Department of Conservation is responsible for managing NZ's whitebait fisheries, and you can find the whitebait rules and regulations on their website www.doc.govt.nz/whitebaiting

Can someone else use my stand?

No one can 'own' a whitebait spot, even if you have a stand there and have been fishing in that location for years. Any disputes over the use or location of stands is a civil matter and not ORC business.

Is there a register of stands?

ORC does not hold a register for whitebait stands. ORC previously instituted a numbered peg system to identify where whitebaiters have been fishing in case of damage to our flood protection assets.

This system no longer exists. Pegs do not prevent anyone else from fishing for whitebait at that location nor does it provide any ownership or control on behalf of the ORC.

What happens if the whitebait stand is in a flood protection area?

The Flood Protection Management Bylaw controls activities that may affect the integrity or operation of flood protection works in Otago.

A new Flood Protection Management Bylaw 2022 takes effect from 1 September 2022.

The new Bylaw could restrict maimai construction along the Waitaki River, in the Lower Taieri or the Clutha/Mata-Au River. A maimai would need to be constructed 7 metres away from flood protection works which are identified in the Bylaw such as defences against water, groynes and cross banks.

You may need an authority from ORC if you plan on constructing or putting up a structure. Go to www.orc.govt.nz/flood-protection-management-bylaw to find out more, see any changes and find an application form.

What are the rules?

Regional Plan: Water - Rule 13.2.1.6

You can have a whitebait stand on or under the bed of any lake, river or regionally significant wetland as long as:

- The structure is erected or placed in or on the bed of the **Clutha River/Mata-Au, or its branches**
- The structure is open piled
- The structure does not exceed three square metres in area
- The total length of any structure must not exceed more than 10% of the width of the river or lakebed that it is located on. The maximum length of ground that a structure can cover along river bank or lake shore is 3 metres in total length.
- The structure is at least 20 metres from any neighbouring structure, flood gate, confluence or culvert located within the bed of a lake or river
- The site is left tidy following the erection or placement

If you can't meet all of these requirements you will need a resource consent.