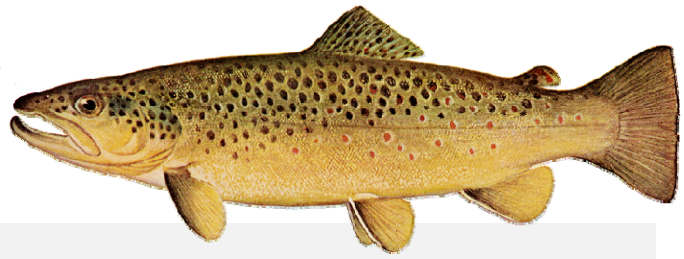


FISHING REPORT NUMBER 1

4/26/2012



INLAND REPORT

Opening Day weather was good, with comfortable temperatures and cloudy to mostly sunny skies, and anglers enjoyed good fishing in many areas last Saturday. Eight of the eleven Trout Parks were stocked on Opening Day and the many kids present enjoyed helping us stock. DEEP's in-season stocking is now underway with over 240,000 additional trout scheduled to be stocked between Opening Day and the end of May.

TROUT

Rivers & streams – Opening Day anglers found most streams at low levels with trout often concentrated in typically deeper locations. Fish were often seen, but weren't always biting. Sunday's rains did improve conditions in many streams, as flows in most areas are now back up near to their typical spring levels.

Some nice fish came to net on Opening Day, with many over 20 inches. A 24.75 inch rainbow trout topped out as the largest trout reported this week. Best reports from the West Branch Farmington River, Farmington River, Salmon River (a 19", 4.5 lb rainbow, a 5.8 lb rainbow and a 5 lb brown trout among the catches), Naugatuck River (15 trout for one angler), Farmill River, Pomperaug River (22" rainbow trout), Hockanum River, Farm River and Coginchaug River. Some action also reported from Sandy Brook, East Aspetuck River, Mill Pond Broad Brook, Saugatuck River, Pootatuck River, Scantic River, Mianus River, Pequonnock River, Yantic River, Fenton River Shetucket River, Hammonasset River, Eightmile (Haddam/Lyme) River, Moosup River and the Willimantic River TMA, although anglers had to work with very low flows and easily spooked fish in many places.



Farmington River –Fishing was very good this past weekend and conditions should continue to be great for fishing with West Branch flows currently clear and low-moderate (76 cfs at Riverton with the Still River adding an additional 122 cfs below Riverton).Water temperatures (mornings) are in the low 50's °F.

Hatches/patterns include Hendricksons, Blue Winged Olive, Midges, Early Stone flies and Quill Gordons. Successful fly anglers are using Hendrickson (#12-14), Gray Stoneflies (#14-18), some Blue Wing Olive (#16-24), Blue Quill Duns (#16-18), Winter Caddis (#18-24), Midges (#22-32) and a variety of nymphs. Hare's Ear (#14-16), Yellow Prince (#14-16), Woolly Buggers and Streamers (#2-12) are also producing. Try working nymphs on the bottom Euro style. Surface activity will increase with rising temperatures.

Housatonic River – Fishing has been very good and the recent rains have improved flows to more typical spring levels. Flows are clearing and dropping nicely, currently 840 cfs at Falls Village and 1,550 cfs at Gaylordsville. Conditions this weekend should be very good.

Hatches/patterns include Green/Olive Caddis, Hendrickson Spinners (some still around) and Early Stone flies (a few on the water), Blue Wing Olive (#16-18), Hendrickson (#12-14), Parachute Adams (#14-26), Midges (#20-28) and black/brown stoneflies (#12-16).

Rivers and streams stocking update. This week in **eastern CT**, Beaver Brook, Bigelow Brook, Blackledge River (lower), Branford River, Crystal Lake Brook, Eight Mile River, Farm River (upper & lower), Fenton River, Hammonasset River (including TMA), Hockanum River (including TMA), Jeremy River, Little

River (Canterbury), Middle River, Mount Hope River, Natchaug River, Raymond Brook, Roaring Brook (Stafford), Salmon River (including TMA), Shetucket River, Still River (Eastford), Susquetonscut Brook, Tankerhoosen River, West River, Willimantic River (below TMA), Middle River and Yantic River (including TMA) are all scheduled to be stocked.

In western CT, the Bantam River (Inlet and Outlet), Butternut Brook, East Aspetuck River, West Branch Farmington River (year-round catch & release area), Mianus River (including the TMA), Mill River (Hamden, including TMA), Mill River (Fairfield, including TMA), Saugatuck River (including TMA), West Branch Saugatuck River, Shepaug River and Wepawaug River are scheduled to be stocked this week. **Note that stocking schedules are subject to change.**

Lakes & Ponds – Fair to good Opening Day weekend fishing was found throughout Connecticut with reports from Lake McDonough (good), West Hill Pond, Cedar Lake (10 trout), Beach Pond (fair), Lake Wonoskopomuc, Black Pond, Squantz Pond (fair), Candlewood Lake (good near Danbury Town Park in the south end and Lynn Demming Park in the north, slower elsewhere in the lake), East Twin Lake (good), Saugatuck Reservoir, Highland Lake, Lake Quonnipaug, Crystal Lake (Ellington), Long Pond, Mount Tom Pond, Bigelow Pond, Coventry Lake, Gardner Lake (very tough getting a boat launched here) and Mohawk Pond. Rogers Lake was tough for many anglers.

Lakes and ponds stocking update. In eastern CT, Black Pond (Woodstock), Branford Supply Pond, Crystal Lake, Gardner Lake, Hanover Reservoir, Horse Pond, Mansfield Training Ponds, Mashapaug Lake, Paine Pond, Lake Saltonstall and Walkers Reservoir (east) are scheduled for stocking this week (4/23 – 4/27).

In western CT, Black Rock Lake, East Twin Lake, Highland Lake, Mohawk Pond, Mohegan Lake, Mount Tom Pond, Tyler Pond, West Hill Pond, West Side Pond and Lake Wintergreen are scheduled for this week.

Trout Parks – Fishing was good at all the Trout Parks. Eight Trout Parks, Chatfield Hollow, Mohegan Park Pond, Valley Falls Park Pond, Black Rock Pond, Wolfe Park (Great Hollow Pond), Southford Falls, Stratton Brook and Wharton Brook were stocked on Opening Day. The Day Pond, Chatfield Hollow, Natchaug River and Valley Falls Park Pond Trout Parks are scheduled to be stocked this week.

LARGEMOUTH BASS – Spring arrived early this year, and April fishing for bass has generally been fair to good in a most locations with good reports from Lake Saltonstall, Lake McDonough, East & West Twin Lakes, Lake Wonoskopomuc, Congamond Lakes, Quaddick Reservoir and fair reports from Lower Bolton Lake (catches here include a 7 lb largemouth), Ball Pond, Squantz Pond, Lake Zoar (catches include a 4.8 lb bass), Lake Lillinonah (although sometimes shading to slow here), batterson Park Pond and Pattagansett Lake. Try targeting dark bottom warmer back water coves.

SMALLMOUTH BASS are also fishing well, with good reports from Candlewood Lake (some in the 4 lb range) Highland Lake and fair reports from Colebrook Reservoir, Bantam Lake, Lake Zoar and Lake Lillinonah.

NORTHERN PIKE – Some catches reported from Winchester Lake. Other places to try for pike include Mansfield Hollow Reservoir, the upper Housatonic River, Pachaug Pond, Quaddick Reservoir and Hopeville Pond. The pike season at Bantam Lake opens May 1st.

ZEBRA MUSSELS- - Last year (2011), mussels were found in more locations throughout the Housatonic River and impoundments.

The presence of adult zebra mussels in Lake Housatonic was confirmed in November, 2011.

Earlier that summer, adult mussels were confirmed in the Housatonic River in Massachusetts and free-floating juveniles (veligers) were found at a number of sites in the river downstream to Lake Lillinonah.

In October, 2010, adult zebra mussels were found in Lake Zoar and Lake Lillinonah. Prior to these discoveries, zebra mussels had been found (1998) in CT only in East Twin Lake and West Twin Lake (Salisbury). Anglers fishing in any of these waters and western Connecticut in general **should use extra care to avoid transporting water, aquatic vegetation, and possibly zebra mussels to new locations.**



WALLEYE are being caught at Batterson Park Pond and Lake Saltonstall. Target near shore rocky cobble areas with stick baits, Shad Raps and live bait.

CONNECTICUT RIVER – After being at low levels formuch of the late winter and the spring, the river has risen to more typical levels. **STRIPED BASS** are up in the river. mostly schoolie size (14-24”) fish showing up, plus a number of keepers mid-river. Sand & blood worms work best in early season stained water. Anglers are catching the schoolies on a variety of plastic baits on jigs. **SHAD** are being caught, indicating that these tasty treats are making their annual trip up the Connecticut and the Holyoke, MA fishlift has already passed over 36,000 fish as of 4/24/2012. The run is several weeks early due to the warm weather. **CARP** are being caught on homemade bait with several fish in the low to mid 20 lbs. being found. Try the coves south of Hartford for some action. **NORTHERN PIKE** are being caught in the coves and the Middletown and Haddam areas. Two pike in the mid 30 inch range were reported in Wethersfield Cove.

NOTES & NOTICES:

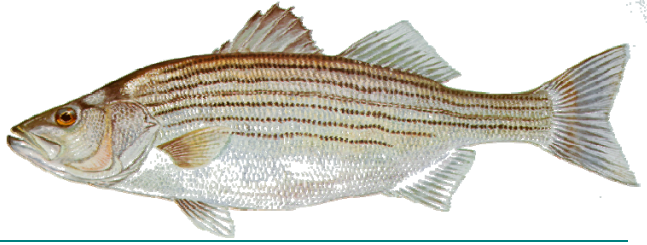
- ❖ The **state boat launch on BANTAM LAKE** at the old Beverly’s Marina site is now open to use. The launch is open 24/7 and parking for the launch is restricted to an absolute maximum of 20 vehicles.
- ❖ **LAKE LEVELS.** A number of lakes that underwent winter drawdown have not yet refilled to typical spring levels due to this year’s dry weather. Additionally, several water bodies were drawn down to facilitate dam repairs. These lakes include **Ashland Pond, Bashan Lake** (down 2 feet), **Beseck Lake** (down several feet), **Billings Lake, Gardner Lake** (down 2 feet), **Hopeville Pond, Pickerel Lake** and **Mashapaug Lake** (down 1 foot). The launching of trailer boats will be difficult to impossible to launch at **Bashan Lake** (very difficult), **Beachdale Pond** (impossible), **Gardner Lake** (very difficult), **Pachaug Pond** (difficult) and **Wyassup Lake** (impossible, note that this lake was not stocked with trout this spring). Launching may also require extra care at a number of other lakes and ponds such as Hopeville Pond, Pickerel Lake and Highland Lake.

TIPS & TRICKS – TROUT IN LAKES

Trolling got off to a great start with many big fish being taken. Experienced anglers used stick baits, spinners, rooster tails, flash kings (orange/gold), DB Smelts (blue/silver), streamers & live bait. Lead line, flat line and down rigger presentations were reported as being effective. Fish were found from 0 to 12 feet. Slower boat speeds of 1.5 – 1.9 mph were found to be the best as fish are still sluggish with the colder water temperatures and lower light levels. Bigger fish can typically be found in 45-50°F water. Lure color can be very important and bright colors (reds, oranges, or yellows) below 40 feet of water usually don’t work. Black and silver work at any depth and should be the go-to colors. One angler reported success trolling deep (25-30 ft) using copper/silver flashers & mooselooks.

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MARINE FISHING REPORT



Surface water temperatures in Long Island Sound (LIS) range from the high 40's to low 50's °F. Check out the following web sites for more detailed water temperatures and marine boating conditions:

<http://www.mysound.uconn.edu/stationstat.html>
<http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/>

http://marine.rutgers.edu/mrs/sat_data/?nothumbs=1
<http://www.wunderground.com/MAR/AN/330.html>

STRIPED BASS fishing is good in the major coastal rivers and even on the local reefs for keeper bass which is earlier than usual for this time of year. Live lining eels or snapping wire with parachute rigs dressed with pork rind is the way to go for larger stripers on the reefs and rip areas. Just remember to use circle hooks when using live or dead bait to avoid gut hooking. Schoolie hot spots include the lower Pawcatuck River, Thames River from Norwich down to Montville, Connecticut River by Great Island (Wood Lot), and the Housatonic River. Light spinning tackle enthusiasts and fly rodders have been scoring high numbers in the catch and release category. Fishing the early morning dawn patrol on an ebb tide makes a big difference.

TAUTOG fishing season has been red hot this spring on the local rock piles, wrecks, and breakwaters with double digit heavy weights being reported. Asian shore crabs have been the choice bait.

WINTER FLOUNDER fishing has been good in the Niantic River and in western LIS in the Westport to Norwalk area. Fishing the channels and chumming heavy is key to catching.

WHITE PERCH fishing is good in the Connecticut River at the DEEP Marine Headquarters fishing pier in Old Lyme and the Lieutenant River by Rte 156. Coves in the Pawcatuck, Thames, and the Housatonic Rivers are also producing good catches.

BLUEFISH are just right around the corner even though anglers have been catching fish for a while at the Millstone warm water discharge.

2012 BONUS STRIPED BASS PROGRAM

- In 2012 DEEP is issuing free vouchers to anglers fishing Connecticut waters (both Inland and Marine) to take 4,025 striped bass in a size range (at least 22 inches in length but shorter than 28 inches) below the current recreational minimum length for stripers in CT.
- Each voucher allows the angler to keep one "bonus" striper and can be used anywhere on Connecticut waters. The vouchers are valid through June 30, 2012.
- Vouchers can be obtained at the same DEEP Offices where licenses are sold from DEEP Environmental Conservation (EnCon) Police Officers, Riverfront Recapture Rangers and a number of tackle vendors and town halls where licenses are available (*for a complete list, see link below*).
- Anglers can obtain two vouchers per day and use a maximum of two vouchers per day to keep "bonus" fish.
- Use of these vouchers does not affect an angler's ability to keep their regular daily limit of striped bass. Each angler participating in the program can also keep up to two striped bass a day, 28 inches or larger in total length.

For more information, visit: www.ct.gov/dep/fishing or call: 860-424-3474 or 860-434-6043..

DEEP WEEKLY Fishing Report



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Striped bass image courtesy Duane Raver/USFWS