

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT
 Report Date: May 23, 2017



This is a report generated by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection/ Inland Fisheries Division- Diadromous Program. For more information, contact Steve Gephard, 860/447-4316. For more information about fish runs on the Connecticut River call the USFWS Hotline at 413/548-9628 or visit the USFWS website at www.fws.gov/r5crc. For more information about Atlantic salmon, visit the Connecticut River Salmon Association at www.ctriversalmon.org.

CONNECTICUT RIVER LOCATIONS

FISHWAY (RIVER)	ATLANTIC SALMON	AMER. SHAD	ALEWIFE	BLUEBACK HERRING	GIZZARD SHAD	STRIPED BASS	SEA LAMPREY	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
Rainbow* (Farmington)	0	360	0	12	0	0	645	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0**	0	0
StanChem* (Mattabesset)	0	2	80	0	79	1	12	0	17
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	0	6	21	0	0	13	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	8,522	FINAL- counter pulled due to downrunners				-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
West Springfield (Westfield- MA)	0	509	0	2	0	0	32	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	3	258,678	269	27	451	8	2,610	SNS**=0	0
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turners Falls* (Connecticut- MA)	0	281	-	0	0	0	0	-	-
Vernon* (Connecticut- VT)	0	2	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
Bellows Falls* (Connecticut- VT)	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
Wilder* (Connecticut- VT)	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
Other (all sites)	0								
TOTALS=	3	259,548	8,877	62	630	9	3,312	0	17
(last year's totals)	6	391,096	792	3,558	684	619	36,914	6	19,799

Fishways listed in gray font above are not yet opened for the season. In some cases, the fishways will be opened soon. In the case of the fishways on the Connecticut River, some fishways are not opened until significant numbers of fish pass through the fishway immediately downstream of them. If that never happens, the fishway may not be opened during the season.

*There is a video camera that records passage. There is a considerable lag between the date a tape is recorded and when staff is able to count fish from the tape, so these numbers will not represent up-to-date counts until after the end of spring season.** Population estimates based on end-of-the-season nest surveys.- +There is an electronic fish counter at this fishway. ++Shortnose Sturgeon
 NOTE: All fish that pass through the Turners Falls, Vernon, Bellows Falls, and Wilder fishways had to first go through the Holyoke Fishlift where they were counted. Therefore those fish are not included in the totals at the bottom.

COMMENTS:

What we have been promising finally came true—we had warm weather and the shad run responded! The Holyoke Fishlift set a new one day record for lifting shad on Thursday at 55,000—but then broke it the next day by lifting 76,554, followed by another 58,554 on Saturday. The lift was cycling every 15 minutes and could not keep up with the fish. Dave Ellis of our program was up there yesterday picking up shad for transplanting into the Farmington River and reported the place was loaded with fish. Even the apron of the dam was full of surfing shad and Sea Lamprey. There are a lot of big females and also quite a few small males. The long-term mean annual lift number is 310,000. Last year the total was 391,000. While we still have a ways to go to beat those numbers, it appears that passage conditions will stay very good for at least the next week. The lack of real hot weather will keep the river from ‘overheating’ and prompting the shad to stop migrating and spawn. This will also give them chance to start using upstream fishways, which you can see have not passed many shad yet. But as the fish move upstream, the water temperatures tend to decrease, so that prolongs the run. Last week the water temperature at Holyoke did not exceed 16 C (61 F), which is still quite cool for this time of year.

The Blueback Herring run remains somewhat a mystery. During the past week we had another strong wave in the Salmon River and there were plenty in the tailrace at Rainbow Dam but noticeably absent elsewhere including the two Roaring brooks, and Moodus, Eightmile and Coginchaug rivers. Holyoke has passed more this year (269) than last year (137) but considering that they used to pass over 600,000, these are insignificant numbers. With the huge numbers of shad below the dam, the striped bass gauntlet is likely switched off. The prey are just swamping them. But there are many stripers around including a lot of schoolies. The lower river is now loaded with hickory shad as well. Snorkeling surveys at Leesville indicate that large numbers of spottail shiners are moving upstream but the numbers of many other fish like darters and smallmouth bass are still low. The annual run of elvers has reached Leesville and other inland areas and they’re being to congregate at the eel pass.

Holyoke passed two more adult Atlantic Salmon. The smolt run continues at Rainbow. We’re trying to wrap up our annual fry stocking on the Salmon and Farmington rivers this week. Flows have dropped on the Farmington, which should allow us to stock the last of the fry tomorrow—in advance of any rain we might get on Thursday. The first salmon was trapped at Milford on the Penobscot River in Maine this past week. The river herring count at Milford has already surpassed 280,000.

We had a great annual Open House at the Rainbow Fishway last Saturday, even though we were competing with the Windsor Shad Derby. Many people attended in response to the Fisheries Division’s Facebook Live event the previous day. As of yesterday, we had over 3,400 views of the video. Also in attendance were many teachers, parents, and students who participate in the Connecticut River Salmon Association’s Salmon-in-Schools program. The fishway was full of shad and Sea Lamprey and the weather was great.



Trapping facilities at the Holyoke Fishlift. You can see a sloped flume underneath the concrete beam and a shad splashing into the holding tank. From here, shad are crowded through a pipe and into transport trucks.



We typically haul 85 shad per trip. In this photo, the transport tank mounted on our truck is being drained out a pipe to the left and into the Farmington River. The last few shad ‘circle the drain’ before sliding down the pipe and into the river.

OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

FISHWAY (RIVER)	AMER. SHAD	ALEWIFE	BLUEBACK HERRING	GIZZARD SHAD	STRIPED BASS	SEA LAMPREY	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
Greeneville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	1,202	715	0	37	0	2	0	4
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	15	0	0	-	0	0	0
Jordan Brook ** (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	410	0	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	5,680	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gorton Pond** (Pattagansett R., East Lyme)		1,916	FINAL- counter pulled due to downrunners				-	-
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		386,325	FINAL- counter pulled due to downrunners					
Chapmans Pond* (Menunketesuck R., Clinton)		8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)		2,957	0	0	-	-	-	-
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		2,867	0	0	-	-	-	-
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	5,428	273	96	0	299	0	0
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac River, Meriden)		4	0	1	-	11	-	3
Bunnells Pond* (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	14,868	0	1	0	0	0	-
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		5,315	138	-	-	-	-	-
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		18,374	1,369	0	0	0	0	-

**Fish passage is video-recorded and counts are made off of tapes several days later so these data are always lagged a little behind. This report covers passage up to the following dates for these fishways:*

Greeneville= 5/22 Taftville= 4/21 Occum= 5/16 Tunnel= 5/9 Kinneytown= n.a. Haakonsen= 5/14 Hallville= 5/14 Hanover= 5/9 Bunnells= 5/15

******These locations have an electronic fish counter and are used as index sites for river herring runs. The counter is checked daily Monday-Friday. Monday counts typically include all weekend passage. These counts are usually up-to-date but some may lag behind a day or two, occasionally.

Counts in parentheses indicate numbers seen in a run that is now over and no further fish were counted during the past week. Typically used for alewife runs later in June.

COMMENTS:

Additions to the table above: Clark's Pond on the Indian River in Milford= an additional 1,787 Alewives this week for a seasonal total of 6,059. Bronx River in the Bronx (NYC)= 66 river herring (likely Alewife), 5 white suckers, 3 largemouth bass, and 1 carp.

Things continue to wind down with river herring in the east but fish are still trickling in farther west. Our sampling at the Haakonsen Fishway on the Quinnipiac River showed that all fish were now Blueback Herring and we're assuming that is true for the Saugatuck and Mianus rivers where we see Blueback runs and we've assigned all of last week's counts as Bluebacks. We're still getting reports of lots of herring in the Mill River in Fairfield and given the habitat below Samp Mortar, we assume those may be a mix of Alewife and Blueback Herring. Menhaden have shown up in the harbors to the west being chased by striped bass. That may be good for the last of the river herring runs. The Menhaden can provide them with a bit of cover from the stripers as they try to sneak into the streams to spawn.

Save the Sound is conducting monitoring studies of sites where they have removed dams in the past. Seasonal workers Greg and Hillary are monitoring fish runs and have documented several Alewives in the West River in New Haven at the next dam upstream of where STS removed the Pond Lily Dam two years ago. This demonstrates that the new restored channel where the pond used to be is 'fish passable'. We didn't expect any problems but it is good to verify that.

Back on the Shetucket River to the east, in addition to the number of shad that we show that have been passed at Greenville, Norwich Public Utilities has begun to truck shad from Greenville to above the Occum Dam. So far, they have moved 277 shad upstream. We have not had any counts reported from the video at Taftville but NPU reports no anadromous fish seen at the Occum Dam Fishway so we can assume none or few have been passed at Taftville. On the Quinebaug, First Light reports a malfunction of the Tunnel Fishlift last week but it was back in operation the next day. No additional fish counts to report.

New England Hydro will be celebrating the operation of North America's first Archimedes Screw Generator (Hanover Pond Dam, Quinnipiac River, Meriden) tomorrow with an event that will include DEEP VIPs. The following day, we will be assisting NEH with fish testing by introducing American Shad from Holyoke into the Screw and assessing its physical impact on the fish. Not many anadromous fish have passed through the Hanover Pond Fishway yet but with the numbers passed at the Haakonsen Fishway at the downstream dam, they should be showing up soon. Pat from NEH has documented Sea Lamprey spawning below the dam in a recently reconstructed channel.

Glass eels- Fishing Brook = 7,323 glass eels/187 yellow eels; Mill River Eel Trap= 26 glass eel/185 yellow eels; Greenville Eel Lift= 1 glass eels/102 yellow eels; Hanover Pond= 291 yellow eels.

My weekly Diadromous Fish Radio show is live on iCRV (www.iCRVradio.com) at 8:00 am on Wednesday and re-played at 3:00 and 7:00 pm that day 8 am on Saturday. iCRV now archives shows so if you miss one, you can go online and click on "Outdoors" and the "Fishing" and find past shows to listen to. **Tomorrow, I'll be providing more updates on the shad run and responding to emails that listeners send it during the show.**



The apron of the Holyoke Dam- it's hard to see but in that black water zone below the dam are shad and lamprey struggling up the apron, creating Vs in the water. Hopefully most realize that is the wrong way upstream and drop back and find the entrance of the fishlift, close to where the camera was positioned.



Bruce Williams releasing Atlantic Salmon fry in the Salmon River this past week. Stocking has been delayed due to high water but on this day the water levels were good for stocking.