

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: June 27, 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)	3	615	0	16	0	0	2,184	0	1
Leesville (Salmon)	1	-	-	0	-	-	0***	1	0
StanChem* (Mattabesset)	0	4	78	4	102	1	16	0	19
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	1	6	22	0	0	21	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	8,522 - FINAL	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	FINAL	-	-	-	-	-	-
West Springfield (Westfield- MA)	5	5,810	0	5	0	0	214	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	10	535,207	0	875	698	229	21,520	SNS=9	0
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0
Turners Falls* (Connecticut- MA)	3	40,758	-	0	0	0	1,111	-	-
Vernon* (Connecticut- VT)	2	21,845	-	0	0	0	367	-	0
Bellows Falls* (Connecticut- VT)	0	0	-	0	0	0	697	-	0
Wilder* (Connecticut- VT)	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
Other (all sites)	0								
TOTALS=	19	541,637	8,606	922	800	230	23,955	1/9	20
(last year's totals)	5	392,057	792	3,558	685	638	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.

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:

As predicted, the shad run at the Holyoke Fishlift American Shad count surpassed 530,000, earning the number 2 ranking for best shad count years at that facility. Only 1992 at 720,000 shad had a higher count. It's been a great year for shad, not just by numbers but also river conditions that stayed cool and kept them moving upstream. I was not able to get full updates for upriver fishways for this week (Turners Falls, Vernon, Bellows Falls), but I hope to get those numbers for next week's report (which will be the last of this season) and hopefully we will see plenty of shad moving up into these upper reaches. The last two weeks we have also been warning everyone that we might have a lot of dead shad in the river this year due to the strong run. However, to date, that has not occurred in large numbers. Perhaps they're still coming. I hope to be on the river this weekend and will be looking.

Three more salmon showed up this past week—one each at Holyoke, West Springfield and Rainbow. We never saw the fish at Rainbow but it was captured on video passing the window while staff were not present. See photo, below left. Salmon typically stop arriving by July so these are late fish. It also is typical for late June fish to have been in the river for a while and have lost the bright silver color in favor of a dull grey or even spotted coloration. The fish at Rainbow appears to be very bright, thus fresh from the ocean.

Two more Shortnose Sturgeon were lifted this past week at Holyoke. Other than that, every number seems to have been bumped up a bit but not a lot—a handful more lampreys, one or two more Blueback Herring, etc. Probably the biggest jump was Striped Bass at Holyoke. Note that more Sea Lampreys were counted at Bellows Falls than at the downstream Vernon Fishway. We'll check next week to confirm these numbers. But Sea Lamprey are notoriously hard to count off video. The windows are illuminated all night to provide good images and the lampreys are drawn to the light and attach to the window and go back and forth. It is very difficult for a video reviewer to keep track of individual fish. Although all lamprey that ascend the Bellows Falls Fishway must first come up the Vernon Fishway, some might have slipped past Vernon uncounted. With all the things we had to do in the last two weeks, we were unable to get back to Holyoke and truck more shad down to Connecticut. The days Dave was available, there were no shad. When the shad showed up, he was committed elsewhere. But the U.S. Fish & Wildlife hauled several loads down to the Rainbow Reservoir in Windsor, CT. Over 300 fish were released. We expect to get final numbers soon. But we may have transplanted about as many as what passed up the fishway. Thanks to Ken and his colleagues! We did capture a few Sea Lampreys for transplantation to be used to establish runs in other streams (see below, right).



R-003-17. The third salmon to pass Rainbow Fishway this year. Nice bright fish, especially considering it's June 22!



Adult Sea Lampreys captured at Rainbow. Preparing to be transplanted in other streams.

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)	1,910	735	0	57	2	0	0	6
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	34
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	8	33	0	3	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour) (out of order)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	15	FINAL		0	Lots of trout		5 0
Jordan Brook ** (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	430	FINAL	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook**	-	5,675		FINAL	-	-	-	-
Gorton Pond** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)		1,916		FINAL				
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		386,325	FINAL					
Chapmans Pond* (Menunketesuck R., Clinton)		8		FINAL				
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)		3,308		FINAL-	-	-	-	
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		3,426	FINAL	-	-	0 0	-	-
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	5,524	263	107	0	309	0	0
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac River, Meriden)		15	0	2	-	46	-	0 3
Bunnells Pond* (Pegonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	21,402	FINAL	1	0	0	0	
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		5,315	480	0	-	-	-	-
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		19,242	4,807	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= 6/26 Taftville= 5/14 Occum= 6/19 Tunnel= 5/29 Kinneytown= n.a. Haakonsen= 6/15 Hallville= 5/31
Bunnells= 6/15.

**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.

+This location has a fish trap and fish are enumerated prior to release.

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:

Not much to report—the runs have ended. We picked up a handful of more shad at Greenville and a few clicks at Wood Dam (Blueback Herring?) and that's about it. We closed Haakonsen this past week and have advised Norwich Public Utilities to close Greenville and Occum; The Nature Conservancy to close Wood Dam; and New England Hydro to close Hanover Pond early next week. We expect FirstLight to close both Taftville and Tunnel within the next few days. Eel passes will continue to operate at Greenville, Taftville, Occum (new eel lift coming on line this week) Scotland, and Tunnel. We also hope that FirstLight will view a bit more video by next week so we can share more numbers with you. The numbers at Taftville and Tunnel are very old.

We'll be ramping up eel passes soon since lots of the eels move during the summer. Commissioner Rob Klee will be visiting the Hanover Pond Dam tomorrow and in addition to learning about the Archimedes Screw Generator, he will view the fishway and the new eel pass, which has been doing a good job of capturing eels for transport around the dam. Fishing Brook is our index site for young-of-the-year eels for the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. It is very close to Long Island Sound and saltwater. The catch is dominated by glass eels (unpigmented, fresh from the ocean). This week we captured only 15 glass eels but got about 300 elvers (pigmented). This attests to the lateness of the season. The glass eels have started feeding and developing pigments like a yellow eel.

Save the Sound has hired two seasonal workers to monitor some sites where dams were recently removed. Their work has been going well and the results of have been encouraging: great stream channel development with gravel riffles, diverse instream habitat and luxurious native plant re-vegetation on the banks. Speaking of dam removals, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service reports that the fish runs this spring on the Pawcatuck River have been the highest in 15 years—after the removal of the White Rock Dam in Westerly and Stonington, CT. You may recall that the project—spearheaded by the Rhode Island Chapter of The Nature Conservancy in 2015 with many partners including the CTDEEP and the Connecticut Chapter of TNC—removed an obsolete dam that had been bypassed by a breach in the millrace many years ago. It was always assumed by everyone that the breach made the dam passable to all fish. But work done by us and others pointed to a velocity barrier in the millrace. Fish are counted at the upstream Potters Hill Dam Fishway and the fact that those counts are increasing points to the impact of taking out that deadbeat dam!

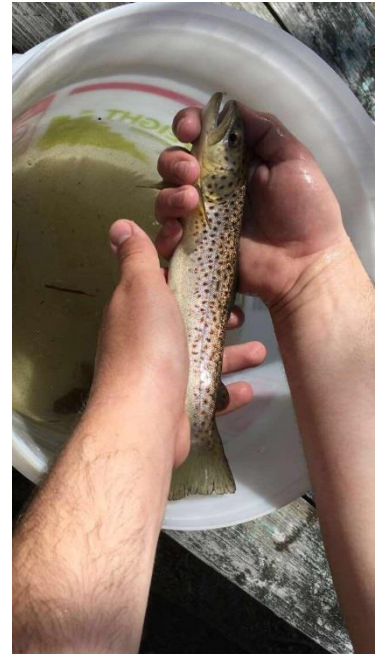
Next week is the last week for reports. If volunteers (thank you!) have any last data to report or anyone else wants to get in a last word, send it in no later than Wednesday morning.

Glass eels- Fishing Brook = 9,589 glass eels/521 elvers; Mill River Eel Trap= 33 glass eels/ elvers/352 yellow; Greenville Eel Lift= 10 glass eels/411 elvers; Hanover Pond= 1,299 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. I will be on the air tomorrow Wednesday June 28, perhaps talking about NASCO and international salmon management.



STS seasonal employees Greg Ostrinski (l) and Hillary Ballek (r) measuring the width of Whitford Brook at the former location of Hyde Pond. The downstream dam was removed in 2015.



A small sea-run brown trout from a coastal stream.