

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT
 Report Date: July 5, 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.ctiversalmon.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	5,935	0	5	0	0	249	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	10	536,252	0	875	717	278	21,526	SNS=23	0
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	0	0
Turners Falls* (Connecticut- MA)	3	45,184	-	0	0	0	6,522	-	-
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	542,807	8,606	922	819	279	23,996	1/23	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:

Obviously not much action during this last week. Only a few numbers changed. This will be our last fish report of the season. I expect most fishways will be closed by next week.

A few comments on the numbers above. First, note that counts for all fishways upstream of Holyoke are incomplete. They are compiled off video files and the people reviewing those files are way behind. For example, the counts for the Manhan River fishway in Easthampton are only based on a couple of weeks in June. All of those numbers will increase and even though this is our last report for the season, these data are not final. I would expect that by September, Ken Sprankle will probably have the final numbers posted on the USFWS website. Go to <https://www.fws.gov/r5csrc/index.html> and click on "Migratory Fish Counts". It is possible that the sturgeon numbers may continue to increase after September. Remember, on the table above, "SNS" on the Holyoke line refers to "Shortnose Sturgeon". Holyoke lifted 14 last week. Holyoke is the only site that passes Shortnose Sturgeon. The data for Sea Lamprey for Leesville is blank. Tomorrow we are doing our annual Sea Lamprey Nest Survey for most of that watershed. The rest will be conducted next week, as we document passage above where the Norton Dam was removed. We will provide Ken with a run size estimated based upon the numbers of nests that we count. As of last week, there were still some live Sea Lampreys in the Salmon River so we feel the late date of the survey this year is warranted to ensure all nests are counted. Last week I made a comment that the number of Sea Lampreys counted at the Bellows Falls dam was higher than that at the Vernon Dam, which is not possible since any fish passing through the BF fishway has to come up the Vernon fishway. Ken reminded me that the counts at BF are more recent than the counts at Vernon. So they're just more up-to-date. Vernon counts will catch up and surpass the BF counts soon.

This morning's issue of *The Hartford Courant* had an article about the fish runs through the StanChem Fishway on the Mattabeset River in Berlin. The article was written some time ago and apparently the paper sat on it for a while because the numbers reported were from May. In the article, I am quoted as saying "Most fish born here have not yet come back from the sea." Alert readers of this report and people who have heard me at presentations will know that is an inaccurate quote. I never refer to these fish as being "born". They are not born (like mammals and some live-bearing guppies or sharks), they are hatched.

The season wrap up? Obviously we had a GREAT shad run. We were surprised that the number of Atlantic Salmon actually went up this year. While the count of Blueback Herring at Holyoke was higher than the past several years, it still was very low and observations from the lower river indicated that the numbers were low and sporadic. The Sea Lamprey run was typical for recent years but a bit low. And it's too early to say much about Shortnose Sturgeon. We'll know more by fall.



One job we'll do this summer is to assist the regional effort to eradicate stands of the evasive water chestnut from the lower Connecticut River. If you want to help, contact the Connecticut River Conservancy.



Another thing we'll be doing is monitoring dam draw-downs associated with dam removals to ensure significant numbers of fish or mussels are not stranded on exposed pond beds. Above, seasonal Zach Skelton monitors a draw down of the Somersville Pond Dam.

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)	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	40
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	9	35	0	4	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	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)		17	0	3	-	52	0 0	104
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= final Taftville= 5/14 Occum= final Tunnel= 6/12 Kinneytown= n.a. Haakonsen= final Hallville= final Bunnells= final.

**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:

As we reported last week, all coastal fish runs are over and most fishways are closed. A few that were still open last week are now closed. I have not heard from FirstLight if the Tunnel Lift and Taftville Fishway are closed but I'm guessing they are. But neither sets of numbers are final. FirstLight is way behind in counts, particularly for Taftville. Those numbers will have to be finalized later in the summer. Note that the numbers for American Eel for both Occum and Hanover are only for the Denil fishways. Both have eel passes and those are reported separately. The numbers for Hanover are listed below (although not updated this week) and the Occum Eel Pass has just begun operation as of last Friday. It is an eel lift, like the one at Greenville (see photo below left). The tank sits on the apron of the dam and two ramps extend at an angle from the top of the tank down to the apron where the eels are wiggling up. Water is pumped from the headpond to a spray bar and the water trickles down the ramp and attracts the eels, which then wiggle up the ramp and fall into the tank, or tub. When it is time to check it, the entire tank with the ramps attached are lifted in the air with a winch and the tank is emptied of eels, which are counted and categorized into size groups and then released above the dam. The tank is then lowered back into place to resume fishing. Just as we were going to 'press', Norwich Public Utilities reported that they had caught their first eels in this lift.

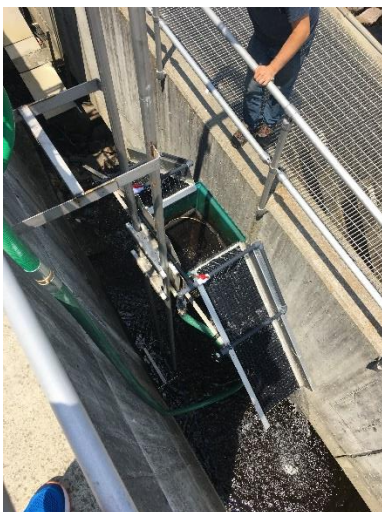
The other fishway that may still be opened is the Kinneytown Fishway on the Naugatuck River. My past comments may have been a bit misleading. This fishway was out of operation most of the season because the dam's flashboards washed out and were not replaced until May 30th. The fishway does not have enough water to effectively operate without the flashboards. After the flashboards were replaced, the fishway operated but our video system malfunctioned so we did not get any data for that fishway to report.

Brian Murphy of the Habitat Conservation & Enhancement (HCE) program has been leading a study on how native, wild brook trout use the recently installed fishway and baffled culvert under Rt. 2. The DOT sliplined the culvert, which would have made the culvert impassible to fish. But our Department required they install baffles in the culvert and a small fishway at the culvert outlet to allow fish to get into the culvert. The DOT provided funds for a study and Brian has tagged many resident trout with PIT tags and installed PIT tag antennae above and below the culvert to track their movements. Preliminary results show the trout are using the culvert very well and we have more young-of-the-year trout upstream of the culvert than we've seen in the past, indicating spawners are making it up the culvert. This project is a cooperative effort between HCE and the Diadromous program with great assistance from Alex Haro from the Conte Lab in Turners Falls. (See photo below right.)

So, it's summer. Our last weekly fish report of the season. What will we do now? Electrofish for eels, salmon, and sea-run trout, repair fishways, conduct lamprey nest surveys and habitat surveys, pull invasive weeds, help remove some dams (hopefully a minimum of three this summer), compile data, write reports, finish installing some eel passes, continue to monitor streams where dams removed in the past.

Glass eels- Fishing Brook = 9,589 glass eels/670 elvers; Mill River Eel Trap= 33 glass eels/ elvers/387 yellow; Greenville Eel Lift= 10 glass eels/423 elvers; Hanover Pond= 1,299 yellow eels. (No new data reported)

My weekly Diadromous Fish Radio show is live on iCRV (www.iCRVradio.com) will be going on hiatus after this morning's show (which is archived on their website. I will be a guest on the show from time-to-time on Wednesday mornings at 8 am throughout the summer and fall to discuss the work we do over the summer.



The new Occum Dam Eel Lift is located between the Denil fishway to the right and the dam abutment to the left. In the down position eels climb up the watered ramps on both sides and fall into the green tub. To remove the eels from the tub, the entire assembly is lifted to the top of the fishway using a winch.



Checking Brook Trout for PIT tags as part of the study of a culvert fishway under Rt. 2 on a tributary of Lyman Brook in Marlborough. Left to Right: Shannon Dolan (American Fisheries Society Hutton Scholar Mentee), Brian Murphy (back to camera, Study Leader), Tim Wildman.