

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT
 Report Date: May 28, 2019



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 visit the USFWS website at www.fws.gov/r5cfc. 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	STURGEON/ TROUT++	AMER. EEL
Rainbow* (Farmington)	0	143	1	0	0	0	145	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0**	0	0
StanChem* (Mattabesset)	0	1	62	0	31	-	11	0	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	1	13	51	0	0	4	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	11,232	FINAL	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	285	FINAL -	-	-	-	-	-
West Springfield (Westfield- MA)	0	1,938	0	4	0	0	67	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	0	131,825	0	4,648	289	7	1,482	0	0
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turners Falls* (Connecticut- MA)	0	3,789	-	0	0	0	9	-	-
Vernon* (Connecticut- VT)	0	0	-	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=	0	69,625	11,591	483	254	4	633	0	0
(last year's totals)	2	281,328	7,326	1,079	99	268	23,955	91/0	2,083

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 (Holyoke)/Sea-run Trout (other locations) 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:

After a couple more high flow days early last week, the river has come back down and is currently around 23,000 cfs. With the warm (hot!) weather over the weekend and the calendar date, this should be prime time for passage at Holyoke. They passed 102,000 shad last week so the numbers are coming up. Although we've heard reports of good shad angling, the netters continue to complain of a poor run. Some have said it is the worst in their memory and some have stopped fishing, saying it is not worth their time. One netter is suggesting the fish changed their behavior due to the high water this spring and may have avoided nets. I think it is too early to make any conclusion about the run this year but there are concerns. However, the news on Blueback Herring is encouraging. In past reports, we've reported some pretty strong waves of bluebacks in Connecticut tributaries. This week, Holyoke Gas & Electric is reporting a very strong weekend where they passed over 4,400 bluebacks (see photo below, left). That is more than we've passed in any entire season in 18 years! This is great news and let's hope they just keep coming. We did have another wave of fish in both the Salmon and Moodus rivers this past weekend but it was smaller than the last one. Steve Leach of FirstLight Power reports that the data for Turners Falls may be an underrepresentation due to high turbidity that limited visibility in the viewing windows.

The Sea Lamprey run is picking up. They have been moving through the Rainbow Fishway reliably for several days and we have been collecting some to transport to the Shetucket River system to help start a run to that watershed. The historical record is clear that the watershed had a good run (two Indian tribes actually fought over them) but they've been gone since the dams were built in Norwich in the mid-1800s. After demonstrating the effectiveness of translocating pre-spawned fish as a way to restart runs in the Naugatuck and Pequonnock rivers, we are now starting the process on the Shetucket. It's pretty easy: we move them to the vacant habitat and they spawn and do the rest. (see photo at the bottom of the last page of this report)

Bruce has finished the stocking of Atlantic Salmon fry for the season. Good timing, as the water temperatures are now starting to rise. Many streams have averaged around 18 C (64 F) and some have topped 20 C (68F) on hot days. (see photo, lower right)

Speaking of salmon, I'll be away the next two week, attending the annual meeting of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO), which is in Tromso, Norway. There will also be a special international symposium as part of the meeting, and as part of the International Year of the Salmon. Tim Wildman will take over this report in my absence.



A good weekend for passing Blueback Herring at the Holyoke Fishlift. This photo of the viewing window has a few larger American Shad mixed in.



Stocking Atlantic Salmon fry in the Farmington River: Tom Chrosniak of the Connecticut River Salmon Association, and Victoria Drumm and Matt Augusto, seasonal employees with our project.

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)	760	699	0	14	0	0	0	0
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scotland* (Shetucket R. Windham)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	0	33	0	0	0	0	0	1
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	0
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	16	0	2	-	0	0	0
Jordan Brook ** (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	116	Final	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	26,390	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		296,703	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Fishing Brook** (Fishing Brook, OSaybrook)		14,279	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Chapmans Pond* (Menunketesuck R., Clinton)		5	Final	0	0	0	0	0
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)		385	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		364	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	2	2,066	12	17	1	502	0	0
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac River, Meriden)		2	0	0	-	12	-	0
Clarks Pond Fishway*** (Indian River, Milford)		541	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Bunnells Pond* (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	10,912	0	1	0	47	0	-
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		6,027	18,107	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= 5/20 Occum= 5/19 Tunnel= 5/20*

*Scotland= 5/13 Kinneytown= 5/26 Haakonsen= 5/26 Hallville= 5/26 Hanover= 5/20 Bunnells= 5/26 Chapmans= 5/21 **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.*

****These are counts made by a volunteer when he is present and represents an index not a census.*

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:

This is the time of year when the action starts dying down along the shoreline and our focus shifts to the Connecticut River (previous section) as the Alewives drop off and the shad and blueback runs continue to head north on the River to cooler waters. We had a few fish straggle in during the early part of last week in Branford and Guilford but then with no more activity, we pulled the last of the electronic fish counters. We are still seeing fish move in larger streams, where we are still operating video systems. Most of our monitors did not report or reported that the runs were quiet last week. The exception is on the Mianus River, where they had a big slug of herring come in. We assume they were mostly Blueback Herring, but we're not sure. There seems to be some herring using the Wood Dam Fishway on the Saugatuck River but we lack a lot of data for that site. The Haakonsen Fishway is passing a lot of different species of fish including Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass, White Perch, White Suckers, Brown Trout, Carp, Channel Catfish, etc. but the Blueback Herring run has not really blossomed yet at that site. However, the big news is the lamprey run of 502 fish! The previous high year was two years ago at 312. Bunnells Fishway on the Pequonnock continues to pass a record number of Sea Lamprey. The 'trout champion' for the season is Hallville Pond with 233 Brown Trout, 3 Brook Trout, and 1 Rainbow Trout. Greenville gets the award for the least common: one Walleye and one Northern Pike.

In other states, both Rhode Island and Massachusetts have reported some big numbers for a couple of streams and New Hampshire and Maine and now getting good numbers.

One of the fish passage projects for this summer will be the construction of a fishway on the Kensington Pond Dam on the Mattabeset River in Berlin, CT. We'll review that later in these reports but the work began this past week with the draining of the pond. My crew monitored the pond for stranded fish and mussels. There were only a very few animals stranded (we relocated about 80 Eastern Floater mussels) but in the process, I was 'stranded'—stuck in the mud! Using five sections of plywood and a local canoe, Kevin Job came out and rescued me (see photo, lower right). Just another reminder that we need to take steps to keep the public away from this drained impoundments.

The glass eels keep coming at a variety of locations. But we had an incredible week for eels at the Chapman Pond Eel pass. We passed 48,000 eels—more than we've ever collected in one season in any location. This coupled with the catches at Fishing Brook and other places point to a really good glass eel run.

Eel Counts- Fishing Brook = 52,761 glass/183 yellow; Chapmans Pond= 60,068 glass/424 yellow; Mill River Eel Trap= 3,867 glass/22 yellow; Hanover Pond= 148 yellow; Greenville Eel Lift= 0 glass/0 yellow (opened but no check until later today). Occum= 0 yellow eels; Tunnel= 43 yellow; Kinneytown= 0 yellow (opening this week), Lower Millpond= 18 glass/0 yellow. The eel count at Fishing Brook is the second highest in the time series.

My weekly Diadromous Fish Radio show is live on iCRV (www.iCRVradio.com) at 8:00 am on Wednesdays. If you can't tune in at 8:00 am, listen to it at any time: www.icrvradio.com/programs/program/50.



Sea Lamprey have been running strongly through the Rainbow Fishway. This fish was part of a group netted out of the fishway and held for subsequent relocation into the Shetucket River system.



Kevin and Steve returning from pulling Steve out of the muck behind Kensington Pond Dam.