

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: April 28, 2020



This is a report generated by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection/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/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	STURGEON/ TROUT++	AMER. EEL
Rainbow* (Farmington)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0**	0	0
StanChem* (Mattabesset)	0	0	56	0	2	-	3	0	2
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	25,172	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)			1,440						
West Springfield (Westfield- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turners Falls* (Connecticut- MA)	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	-
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	0	26,668	0	0	0	0	0	2
(last year's totals)	3	318,707	11,308	5,113	366	207	20,479	20/0	0

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. The same for Rogers Lake—they first pass through Mary Steube and therefore won't be counted as part of the total.

COMMENTS:

The Connecticut River is still low (24,000 cfs) and cold (8 C or 46 F). In fact, the water temperatures went backwards this past week. Holyoke had been lifting but then shutdown to clear debris from the tailrace channel. In doing that work, a crowder screen was damaged and now repairs are being fabricated. Holyoke Gas & Electric expects to have the lift back in operation by Wednesday. Turners Falls will start operating once Holyoke lifts 50 shad. The Vernon fishway is already operational, which is unusual for it to open before Turners Falls. Practically nothing happened at Rainbow this past week: one downrunning salmon smolt. Just slightly more than nothing happened at StanChem: 2 Alewives, 2 Gizzard Shad, and one American Eel. Only Mary Steube on Mill Brook had an active week with over 3,200 Alewives moving up. But only three have passed through the Rogers Lake fishway, although more have been seen hanging out below. A few trout have also used the Rogers Lake fishway. Oh! The shadblows are finally blossoming!

A team of DEEP Fisheries Division biologists headed by Tom Savoy has developed a Story Map project about the American Shad of the Connecticut River and some of our division's long-standing studies. The project recounts the studies initiated for the Connecticut Yankee Atomic Powerplant and our long-term American Shad juvenile index sampling, perhaps the longest database of its kind for shad in the nation. This presentation includes some great photos and data and can be accessed on our DEEP website at: <https://ctdeep.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=ecf0a13f2f804df881b7d150ec654747>. I encourage readers interested in Connecticut River shad visit the page and read it.

An article about our division's trout stocking in The Day:
<https://www.theday.com/local-news/20200423/sign-of-spring-stocking-waters-with-trout>

The CTDEEP Fisheries Division has developed an Instagram page at <https://www.instagram.com/ctfishandwildlife...> Check it out.

It is with great sadness that we note the passing of Jim Carroll of West Hartford. Jim was a long-time member and officer of the Connecticut River Salmon Association, a regular face at meetings of the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission, attendee at the annual meeting of the U.S. Section of NASCO in Gloucester, MA, a member of the Fisheries Division's Fisheries Advisory Council, and an active member of several fishing clubs. He was a friend to many of us in the Fisheries Division. Jim was dedicated to the restoration and management of Atlantic Salmon and other anadromous species and educating young people about conservation. He had an incredibly inquisitive mind, always seeking to learn and expand his understanding about biology and ecology. And he was a true gentleman. He will be greatly missed. Tight lines, Jim.



Jim Carroll (on the left) accepting an award for the Connecticut River Salmon Association last year in recognition of the group's Salmon-in-Schools educational program, which Jim helped run.



The Mary Steube Fishway (Mill Brook, Old Lyme) has a viewing window that is normally closed off with a shutter. This year many alewives have lingered in the resting pool, providing viewing opportunities.

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)	42	35	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taftville* (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	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	6	0	0	-	0	0	0
Jordan Brook ** (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	128	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latimers Brook** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	14,701	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gortons Pond* (Pattaganset R., E.Lyme)		71		(no additional data expected; had to take counter to Brides)				
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		363,153						
Fishing Brook** (Fishing Brook, OSaybrook)		9,900						
Chapmans Pond* (Menunketesuck R., Clinton)		180	0	0	0	0	0	0
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)	69		-	-	-	-	-	-
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		204	0	-	-	-	-	-
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	201	0	4	0	9	0	0
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac River, Meriden)		0	0	0	-	0	-	0
Bunnells Pond* (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	~1,000	Open and operating but no videography this season due to COVID-19					
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		1,848	0	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= 4/27 Taftville= na Occum= na Tunnel= na Kinneytown= 4/27 Haakonsen= 4/27 Hallville= 4/27 Hanover= 4/27

Bunnells= na Chapmans= 4/27**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:

With each week we keep saying that the runs will explode the following week but when the following week arrives, the weather stays cold and few fish move up. In fact, this past week the water temperature consistently went down. We're only a couple of days shy of May and the water temperature still has not consistently reached 10C (50F), which is what it normally is April 1. The radio says we broke some records yesterday for the lowest high temperature on that date. Some parts of Connecticut may get snow tonight. However, the forecast for the next four days is for increasing daytime temperature into the 60s so maybe the jet stream will push north and spring will finally arrive. All staff have remarked that this has been the quietest week in April that they can ever remember. Respectable numbers of Alewives came into Bride, Latimer, and Fishing brooks but beyond that, additional fish registered in the single digits in all other locations. Last week's report could be duplicated: everyone is seeing birds but no fish. Western streams- no fish; mid-coast streams- no fish. Connecticut River tributaries- no fish. A bright spot has been Whitfords Brook where Jon from Save the Sound has trapped and released 199 Alewives so far and one American Shad. Another development was the sighting of a lot of Alewives crowding into the brook that drains Darrow Pond in East Lyme and flows into Latimer Brook. See a video of fish crowding below:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KGJ1gVnizpvVuKwvt3yr9WpNNBh93ZV/view?usp=drivesdk> WE NEED A FISHWAY THERE! The Town owns that dam, which is in need of repairs. First time river herring volunteers should watch that video clip to see what a small group of river herring look like lingering in a small stream below a barrier. Many people reported seeing Alewives come back down from upper areas where Kevin has trucked. He has trucked over 31,000 Alewives this year and apparently some of them are dropping back down, maybe due the cold weather.

Let's hope the weather forecast holds true and we're able to report some much larger numbers at many locations by next week. Stay tuned.

Eel Counts- Fishing Brook = 6,618 glass/49 yellow; Chapmans Pond= 2,343 glass/27 yellow; Mill River Eel Trap= 0 glass/0 yellow; Hanover Pond= 0 yellow; Greeneville Eel Lift= 0 glass/0 yellow. Occum= 0 yellow eels; Kinneytown= 0 yellow.

My weekly Diadromous Fish Radio show is back live on iCRV (www.iCRVradio.com) at 8:00 am on Wednesdays. Due to the COVID situation, I call in rather than sit in the studio. If you can't tune in at 8:00 am, listen to it at any time: www.icrvradio.com/programs/program/50. They archive the shows.



The easternmost fishway in Connecticut is at Wequetequock Pond, where one of the earliest gristmills in the state was built using a huge glacial rock as a dam. We build a stone pool-and-weir fishway around it but in this photo, the water is so high you can't see the weirs.



This is a clip from the video at the Tunnel Dam fishlift on the Quinebaug River in Preston. The facility has yet to lift any Alewives but this group of Alewives entered the exit flume from upstream (right). They are probably drop downs from the group of fish we released up in the Patchaug River (photo courtesy of Steve Leach, FirstLight Power).