

# CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: June 28, 2011



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](http://www.fws.gov/r5crc). For more information about Atlantic salmon, visit the Connecticut River Salmon Association at [www.ctriversalmon.org](http://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
<b>Rainbow</b> (Farmington)	15	274	0	0	0	0	6,508*	5	0
<b>Leesville</b> (Salmon)	9	-	-	0	-	-	1***	6	0
<b>Moulson Pond</b> (Eightmile)	0	-	1,000s	0	0	0	0***	0	-
<b>Mary Steube</b> <sup>+</sup> (Mill Brook)	-	-	9,080 (final count)	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>WestSpringfield</b> (Westfield- MA)	8	5,014	0	0	0	0	1,589	0	21
<b>Holyoke</b> (Connecticut- MA)	69/11	242,959	0	138	398	163	19,136	0	0
<b>Turners Falls</b> (Connecticut- MA)	0/7	16,592	-	0	0	0	2,032	-	-
<b>Vernon</b> (Connecticut- VT)	0/9	45	-	0	0	0	320	-	-
<b>Bellows Falls</b> (Connecticut- VT)	0/5	1	-	0	0	0	74	-	0
<b>Wilder</b> (Connecticut- VT)	0/1	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
<b>Other</b> (all sites)	2/0								
<b>TOTALS=</b>	103/0	248,925	>10,000	138++	398	163	27,242	11	21
<b>(last year's totals)</b>	51/10	168,430	10000s	92++	370	297	44,711	5	542

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.

\* The number before the slash indicates the total number of salmon seen at the fishway that were not counted at downstream fishways. The number after the slash is the number of those fish that were allowed to continue upstream of the dam. The others were captured for breeding.

\*\*Many of these species move at night. There is a video camera that records overnight passage when staff is not present. So this count is a combination of real-time counts and video counts. 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. ++This total does not include the imprecise estimates at Moulson Pond 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:

Things were pretty quiet this past week, with only a handful of shad lifted and one salmon trapped (at Leesville). The trend of large salmon continued—the Leesville fish was a nice beefy 32 inch long male. Heavy rains brought the rivers back up once again and kept them cool. The temperature at Leesville has been around 19 C and at Rainbow about 20 to 22 C. This is pretty cool for this time of year and that is keeping us in the salmon business. The mainstem river was still very muddy and full of debris over the past weekend and as it clears up we may have an opportunity for one last gasp of salmon coming upstream. In recent years, it is unusual for salmon to be trapped after the Fourth of July. But who knows—this has been a weird year.

The West Springfield Fishway on the Westfield River has set a record for American shad passed at that facility in one season. Caleb Slater from MA Wildlife reports that conditions have been good and the streambed around the fishway entrance did not need its usual re-grading this spring. These numbers imply a real run restoration starting to take hold on the Westfield River.

We were to conduct our annual Connecticut Sea Lamprey Nest Survey on the Salmon and Eightmile rivers this week but the streams are too high and discolored to effectively do it. We may try to count nests piecemeal over the next couple of weeks.

By next week, I hope to have everything as up-dated as possible since it will be our last weekly report for this year. I'll try to get the last information from Jay up in Vermont on the general whereabouts of the released salmon. I'll also try to get updated figures for the Penobscot and Merrimack. If anyone else has more information to pass along for this season, please try to get it to me by July 5.

The Visitors Center at the Vernon Fishway is open 8-3 on weekdays. The Bellows Falls Fishway Visitors Center is open Saturdays 10 AM-4 PM and Sundays 12 PM-4 PM.

Some of you may have heard that Connecticut State Employee Unions voted down a concession package offered by the Governor and now, to close a budget gap, the Governor is planning on laying off thousands of State workers and closing facilities. It is too soon to say how this will affect the DEP's Inland Fisheries Division and Marine Fisheries Division, but it is likely that the impacts could be significant. Stay tuned.

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The photo to the left is an underwater shot of the latest salmon at Leesville (L-000-11) nosing up to the sorting gate in the trap. The photo to the right is L-009-11 in the holding tank. This photo is not that sharp but if you look carefully, you'll see a whitish streak down the very centerline of the top of the fish. That is a line of *Argulus*, external parasite that are like fleas. They don't burrow in like a tick but crawl along the surface of the fish and gnaw on the mucus layer. They usually drop off when the fish goes into the cold holding water but the patchy area may persist for a while. Generally, the *Argulus* (which the fish pick up in freshwater) is harmless although severe infestations can lead fish to try to scrape them off on rocks and that scraping can result in injury.

## 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)	992	248	0	103	0	0	0	1	
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	669	
Versailles Pond (Little R., Sprague)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	13	6	0	20	0	0	0	0	
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	0	0	0	0	56	0	0	
Whitfords Brook (Whitfords Br., Groton)	0	none this week							
Trading Cove Brook** (Trading Cove Br., Montville)		1,208 (FINAL)							
Latimers Brook+ (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)		2,679 (FINAL)							
Gorton Pond (Pattagansett R., E.Lyme)		none this week							
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		196,996	(FINAL)						
Fishing Brook** (Fishing Br., O.Saybrook)		164	(FINAL)						
Capello Pond (East River, Guilford)		none this week							
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)		4,476 (FINAL)							
Bunnells Pond (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)		low numbers this week							
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		2,103	104 (FINAL)						
Mianus River Pond** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		66,521	25,753	(FINAL)		0	0	1	-

*\*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= 6/24    Taftville= 6/05    Occum= 4/28    Tunnel=6/13    Kinneytown= 6/21.*

*\*\*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.*

*+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:

Our crew did not see any river herring anywhere in the state this past week and we are declaring the runs over. Most partners have shut down their counters for the year. Often, we begin shutting down the fishways at this time, too, so that low water will not draw down the ponds behind the dams. However, the weather has been so wet that the streams are pretty high and this is not a worry. Therefore, we are keeping most of the fishways open to accommodate any late arriving migrants, non-target species (e.g. smallmouth bass), and let post-spawned river herring back down. Some fishways are not the best route for coming back down but at some sites the fishway may be preferable to going over a 30 foot spillway or even going over a 5 foot spillway onto a pile of rip-rap. The Shetucket River fishways will be closing at the end of this week. We were not able to collect some reports since many of the folks counting fish off video and reporting them to us are at an out-of-state conference (see below). We hope to get final counts for all of these facilities by next week's final report.

The glass eel run is slowing down but still occurring at both Fishing Brook (300 this past week) and Mill River (362 this past week). The seasonal total for Fishing Brook at this time is 23,541. We continue to work on other eel passes that were damaged and hope to have the back in place very soon.

Some of the work has slowed down this week due our attendance at a national conference on fish passage occurring in Amherst this week. The three day conference includes papers on all manner of upstream and downstream fishways, dam removals, monitoring and evaluations, engineering, and plenty of case studies. Attendees came from over 30 states (and several nations) but Connecticut is well-represented with agency folks like us, NGO partners like Save the Sound, Connecticut River Watershed Council, many engineering firms that work on designing projects for us and utility folks like Bob Stira from FirstLight,. Of course there are lots of our out-of-state friends and colleagues like fishway engineer gurus of Orvis, Quinn, Rizzo and other U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service folks, and NOAA Restoration Center allies like Turek and Catena, and friends in the trenches working to get fish upstream in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and New York. So much progress has been made in this field in just the last decade—as witnessed by the diversity and number of attendees, papers, successful case studies, and new innovative designs for dealing with dams and culverts. These conferences are a good way of getting the word out and educating and training all of us in the latest developments.



*This is the time that eels that have been in the river for a year or so continue moving upstream. Here, Duncan Broatch of Summit Hydro, "tunes up" his Delaware-style eel pass on the Aspinoak Pond Dam on the Quinebaug River.*



*Normally, most ospreys in Connecticut nest on human-made nesting platforms. Last year, I saw my first "natural nest" in a tree along the Connecticut River. They're back this year with at least one and maybe two natural nests near Chapmans Pond.*