

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: April 2, 2012



This is a report generated by the Connecticut Department of Energy and 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/r5scr. 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)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0*	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0***	0	0
Moulson Pond (Eightmile)	0	-	~2,000	0	0	0	0***	0	-
Mary Steube+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	3,042	-	-	-	-	-	-
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	0/0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turners Falls (Connecticut- MA)	0/0	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	-	0
Wilder (Connecticut- VT)	0/0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
Other (all sites)	0/0								
TOTALS=	0/0	0	5,042	0++	0	0	0	0	0
(last year's totals)	111/11	249,329	>10,000	138++	423	184	27,233	11	14,502

These figures adjusted after last year's report ended and does not include 3 shortnose sturgeon passed over the summer.

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:

Last week we hurried out with the first report of the season because alewives were running strong and had already been seen as far upstream as the Farmington River. Strong runs were reported in the lower tributaries. After issuing the report, we heard of anglers catching American shad as far upstream as the Farmington River. Quite unprecedented for March! So now that we have everyone all excited about the 2012 fish runs, we can report that not a whole lot happened this last week. The weather turned cold, water temperatures dropped, and the fish backed off. We had another wave of fish come through the Mary Steube Fishway in Old Lyme but the Lyme Land Conservation Trust reported no further observations at the Moulson Pond Fishway, just north of there. Nothing seen at Leesville this past week.

By next week, we should have some reports on the commercial shad fishery.

So—there really isn't much to report this week. But look at the comments section two pages down to see references to diadromous fish in the news.

I'll close this section with a photograph that many of you may have already seen but since Hurricane Irene occurred after we suspended these reports last year, I'll include it now; this was taken a few days after Hurricane Irene struck and did lots of damage to tributaries in Vermont and Massachusetts:



[download large image \(3 MB, JPEG\)](#)

[download Google Earth file \(KML\)](#)

acquired September 2, 2011

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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)	7	170	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Versailles Pond (Little R., Sprague)	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	0
Whitfords Brook (Whitfords Br., Groton)	0	0						
Trading Cove Brook (Trading Cove Br., Montville)		0						
Latimers Brook+ (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)		3,900						
Gorton Pond (Pattagansett R., E.Lyme)		3,220						
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		39,434						
Fishing Brook (Fishing Br., O.Saybrook)		1						
Capello Pond** (East River, Guilford)		nothing seen this week						
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)		nothing yet						
Bunnells Pond (Pegonnock R., Bridgeport)		fish seen but not this past week						
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		1,100						
Mianus River Pond** (Mianus R., Greenwich)	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= 3/23. Taftville= 3/25. Occum= n.a. Tunnel= n.a.. Kinneytown= n.a.

******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:

The same comments can be made for the shoreline that were made for the Connecticut River—very little fish activity this past week due to the cold weather. There were still some alewives moving into some of the coastal systems. You can see the numbers have bumped up on a few counts, above. The glass eels are picking up, too, but still slowly. Our numbers at our index station at Fishing Brook is at 1,052.

The dry weather continues to be a problem. We had a substantial forest fire along the Eightmile River in East Haddam and there are fishways that are carrying the entire stream flow through them. This is like summer flows. This promises to be a problem for getting fish upstream in smaller systems if we don't get rain. The 7-day forecast I heard this morning calls for no rain in sight.

While we're waiting for the fish to return, let's catch up on some news:

First, the RIVER HERRING CLOSURE for the State of Connecticut has been extended for another year, until March 31, 2013. *The Hartford Courant* ran an article about it this morning, April 2. Some people have suggested that the ban might be in its last year due to this season's strong run. But I will remind everyone that you should not be swayed by the headline of the *New London Day* article last week that stated "Alewives Returning in Record Numbers". Alewives have returned in record numbers in one small coastal stream. For Latimers Brook it is ~4,000 fish instead of 2,900. No other records are being set anywhere. Furthermore, the species that is in the worse shape is blueback herring and they haven't even begun to show up. Suggesting that recovery is imminent is WAY premature...

There is a new Atlantic salmon film getting people excited. You can find out about it in many ways, but this link will provide a little information: <http://hatchesmagazine.com/blogs/Hatches/2012/02/27/turning-tail-trailer/>

The New York Times had an article about the glass eel run (and poaching) in Maine. Use this link to go to the article: http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/30/us/in-maine-fishing-for-tiny-eels-and-big-profits.html?_r=1&ref=todayspaper

Speaking of eels, Joe and the Town of Greenwich have got exciting plans for getting eels upstream on the Byram River in Greenwich. Check out this article: <http://www.greenwichtime.com/news/article/Trapped-baby-eels-to-get-a-helping-hand-in-3432292.php>

Here's another article in the NY Times talking about the need to conserve forage fish. This is relevant to what we do, since the river herring that we pass upstream are an important forage fish: http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/02/science/earth/forage-fish-catches-should-be-reduced-report-says.html?_r=1&ref=us

Finally, I also attached an article I wrote about fishways for the current issue of Connecticut Wildlife, published by our Department. It describes our program of building fishways in Connecticut. For those of you who are not familiar with this magazine, it is a real good deal. First of all, it is not just about wildlife—although it has great articles and photos about all types of wildlife in Connecticut—it also runs features on fish and fishing and forestry and lots of news relating to the DEEP and its management of natural resources. It comes out every two months and it costs \$8.00 a year! It's a bargain. If you might be interested in subscribing, go to: http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2723&q=325712&depNav_GID=1655

