

# CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: May 22, 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](http://www.fws.gov/r5scr). 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)	3	60	0	0	0	0	668*	8	0
<b>Leesville</b> (Salmon)	5	-	-	0	-	-	0***	0	0
<b>Moulson Pond</b> (Eightmile)	0	1	>8,000	>7,000	0	0	0***	0	-
<b>Mary Steube<sup>+</sup></b> (Mill Brook)	-	-	17,057 (FINAL)	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>WestSpringfield</b> (Westfield- MA)	0	5,602	0	0	176	0	238	0	0
<b>Holyoke</b> (Connecticut- MA)	9/0	233,613	0	35	221	13	3,346	0	0
<b>Turners Falls</b> (Connecticut- MA)	0/0	1,375	-	0	0	0	0	-	-
<b>Vernon</b> (Connecticut- VT)	0/0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	-
<b>Bellows Falls</b> (Connecticut- VT)	0/0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
<b>Wilder</b> (Connecticut- VT)	0/0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
<b>Other</b> (all sites)	0/0								
<b>TOTALS=</b>	17/0	239,276	>25,057	>7,035++	397	13	4,252	8	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:

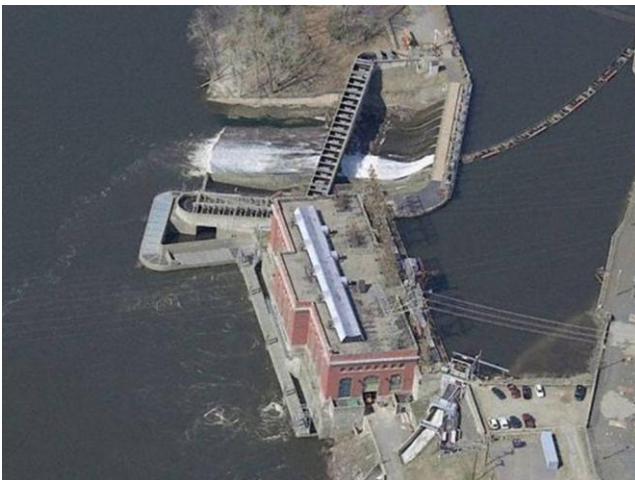
It has been a quiet week in the watershed—or at least HAD been. There has been no further action with blueback herring even in the lower tributaries (Holyoke lifted an additional 29). Only two salmon were captured, including a 26" fish at Rainbow yesterday. We'll have to read the scales on that one to determine if it is a grilse or small two-sea winter fish. However, toward the end of the week, the shad started moving up through Holyoke with a vengeance. They passed over 85,000 shad this week and Rich Murray of Holyoke Gas & Electric reports that on Sunday morning, the shad were so thick they had to shut down the spillway lift for a while to correct a malfunction. THIS JUST IN: Holyoke lifted nearly 46,000 shad yesterday!!!! Shad had been congregating in the tailrace at Rainbow but not entering the fishway—until this morning. Bruce reports that they coming up at a fast clip right now. The West Springfield fishway on the Westfield River passed over 1,000 this past week. The shad netters continue to report that the run is strong and they seem to be doing well this year. Ken Sprankle of USFWS is also out on the river netting shad to radio-tag and he reports no problems catching his quota quite easily. Anglers in Massachusetts seem to be doing well in the traditional locations.

The water conditions vary greatly between locations. At Holyoke, the temperature is holding at 15 C (~60F)—which is good for maintaining the shad run. At Rainbow, the water temperature has been hovering around 19 C (66F) with little variation in stream flow. At Leesville, the week began with temperatures at 17 C (~63F) and steadily declined down to 14 C (57F) by week's end. It's no wonder we haven't seen much at Leesville this past week—the temperatures are going in the wrong direction! They've started to rise again during the past two days and with this rain, maybe it will get the fish moving again. In past years, we've trapped few salmon at temperatures below 17 C, so Rainbow is now in that range but Holyoke and Leesville are still cool. Look for the next few days for potentially large passage numbers.

Improved fishway inspections this season have likely improved fish passage. Recently, FirstLight Power discovered that a sheet metal plate had torn loose from the entrance of the new Gatehouse Fishway in the canal at Turners Falls. This resulted in blocking half of the entrance and increasing the water velocities. FirstLight will shut down and initiate repairs early this Friday morning before the fish start moving.

Last week we reported counting only 19 smolts during the Monday night bypass sampling at Rainbow. Last night, we counted zero. It appears the smolt run is over. We had begun trucking shad out of Holyoke this past week and got a couple of loads in before our shad transport truck blew its transmission while doing 60 mph on I-91 in MA. (Dave Ellis does not recommend this experience.) The load was headed up to New Hampshire for release but was instead released into the Oxbow in Northampton, MA. We will be out of the business of hauling shad for the rest of this season.

At the Essex Fishlift (Merrimack River, MA) they've seen 25 salmon, 356 shad, and 8,869 river herring. At the Veazie Fishway (Penobscot River, ME) they have seen 94 salmon, 19 river herring, and 747 sea lamprey.



The Cabot Station Powerhouse is at the end of a 2 mile long power canal downstream of the Turners Falls Dam. The fishway wraps around the upper side of the powerhouse and delivers fish to the power canal. The fishway with the problem is at the upper end of the canal—I can't find a photo of it!!!



Here's a large tiger trout (brown trout x brook trout hybrid) passing the window at the Rainbow Fishway. It is hard to see the wavy bands on the side of the fish in this photo (try enlargening). The DEEP stocks a few of these hybrids each year. (Photo by Rick Connelly, CTDEEP)

## OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

<b>FISHWAY</b> (RIVER)	<b>AMER.</b> <b>SHAD</b>	<b>ALEWIFE</b>	<b>BLUEBACK</b> <b>HERRING</b>	<b>GIZZARD</b> <b>SHAD</b>	<b>STRIPED</b> <b>BASS</b>	<b>SEA</b> <b>LAMPREY</b>	<b>SEA-RUN</b> <b>TROUT</b>	<b>AMER.</b> <b>EEL</b>
<b>Greeneville*</b> (Shetucket R., Norwich)	2,357	251	0	91	1	42	2	65
<b>Taftville*</b> (Shetucket R., Norwich)	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Occum*</b> (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Tunnel*</b> (Quinebaug R., Preston)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Kinneytown*</b> (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	14	1	0	23	0	29	4	0
<b>Whitfords Brook</b> (Whitfords Br., Groton)	0	none seen this week						
<b>Trading Cove Brook</b> (Trading Cove Br., Montville)		none seen this week						
<b>Latimers Brook+</b> (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)		22,154	(FINAL)					
<b>Gorton Pond**</b> (Pattagansett R., E.Lyme)		96,014	(FINAL)					
<b>Brides Brook**</b> (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		275,686	(FINAL)					
<b>Fishing Brook**</b> (Fishing Br., O.Saybrook)		5	(FINAL)					
<b>Lower Guilford Lake</b> (East River, Guilford)		none seen this week						
<b>Branford Supply Pond Dam**</b> (Queach Br., Branford)		610						
<b>Haakonsen Fishway*</b> (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	1	476	105	3		12	1	
<b>Bunnells Pond</b> (Pegonnock R., Bridgeport)		none seen this week						
<b>Wood Dam**</b> (Saugatuck R., Westport)		3,063	58					
<b>Mianus River Pond**</b> (Mianus R., Greenwich)		119,335	4,701		Present below feeding on downrunners			

*\*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= 5/17. Taftville= 4/25. Occum= 5/14. Tunnel= 5/08 Kinneytown= 5/18. Haakonsen= 5/20*

**\*\***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:

Alewife runs appear to be about over. A few are still moving up the Quinnipiac and Mill rivers and there still is a good wave in the Housatonic. We observed a couple of fish in the Eightmile during the beginning of the week as well as at Clarks Pond Fishway in Milford and in the Pattagansett River and that is it. Downrunners are still coming, particularly on the Mianus. Small numbers of blueback herring are being seen in the Mianus and Quinnipiac and there were a few more fish moving into the Saugatuck at the Wood Dam Fishway but we don't know which species—probably bluebacks, which is what I put them down as.

Some of the “final” numbers in the table above have changed from last week as we review data, adjust for error, and recalculate final numbers.

Let me point out some highlights in this week's report: After years of ‘no show’, it is gratifying to see 14 shad passing through the Kinneytown Fishway on the Naugatuck River. Perhaps our stocking is finally taking hold. Also passed have been four sea-run brown trout and 29 sea lamprey to go with all the other trout, bass, suckers, etc. We have finally worked through the backlog of images for the Greenville Fishlift and they have had some great shad lifting days as of late. The total shot up in the last week. Norwich Public Utilities has already trucked 300 shad into habitat even farther upstream. We also received a surprise recently when we were over there tagging shad and NPU made a lift and the bucket came up with over 60 American eels—most of them large (see photo right below). Large eels normally don't take the lift and to see so many in one lift was remarkable. We think they may have been drawn in by a dead shad or two in the bucket.

The Haakonsen Fishway in Wallingford on the Quinnipiac continues to pass an assortment of fish, including its first American shad and a dozen sea lamprey. The photo below shows a sea-run brown trout moving past the window.

Eels- The seasonal total for the trap at Mill Brook in Old Lyme is 1,372 glass eels and 521 elvers. The new eel pass on the Byram River (Town of Greenwich) reports in with 5 elvers for its first week. Fishing Brook is up to 29,868 and Greenville stands at 235. Joe is seeing lots of glass eels and elvers at the eel pass at the Mianus Pond Dam.

*Future fishway-* At last night's town budget hearing, the voters of Old Lyme voted unanimously to approve the budget which included a full dam repair and concurrent installation of a steep pass fishway for the Rogers Lake Dam. Work will likely occur next summer. We look forward to working with the Town and the Connecticut River Watershed Council on this project. Someday, Rogers Lake could support one of the state's largest alewife runs.



*A sea-run brown trout passing the viewing window at the Haakonsen Fishway on the Quinnipiac River.*



*Jolene Spencer of our crew holding a large American eel taken from the hopper at the Greenville Fishlift.*