

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: June 5, 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)	4	174	0	0	0	1	707*	9	0
Leesville (Salmon)	9	-	-	0	-	-	0***	0	0
Moulson Pond (Eightmile)	0	1	>8,000	>7,000	0	0	0***	0	-
Mary Steube ⁺ (Mill Brook)	-	-	17,057 (FINAL)	-	-	-	-	-	-
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	4	8,715	0	0	176	0	371	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	26/9	464,344	0	39	292	157	14,051	0	0
Turners Falls (Connecticut- MA)	1/1	18,060	-	0	0	0	0	-	-
Vernon (Connecticut- VT)	2/2	8,809	-	0	0	0	470		
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=	43/9	473,234	>25,057	>7,035++	468	158	15,129	9	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:

Flow in the River is up and the water temperature is down since the last report. This could help to extend the shad run a bit further, but it seems that things are starting to wind-down. Only an additional 30,000 shad since the last report! There were a few days during this year's shad run where more than that were past in a single day! Anyhow, the Holyoke Fishlift had to shut-down due to the increase in flows and closed last Friday, Sunday, and Monday. Not sure if they are back in business today, but looking at how little the flow has change from yesterday to today, I suspect that it is still closed. As of May 28th, Turners had passed 18,060 shad. This is a large increase of 14,300 since last week's report. The number of shad through Vernon nearly doubled during the same time-period. It is great to see that many anadromous fish enter the beautiful waters of Vermont. The West Springfield Dam Fishway on the Westfield River also added 1,137 shad to a great year. Even Rainbow Fishway added 40 shad to its season total thus far! Speaking of Rainbow, over 120 people came-out on a rain-soaked Saturday to tour the facility. It is rewarding to witness the sustained interest and support for the programs that mean so much to us fish geeks.

Steve's comment about the end of the sea lamprey run in Connecticut has been supported by the scant few additional lamprey counted since the last report. The fun with them now is to watch and see the numbers climb further up the watershed.

Anglers in the Salmon River should know that our agency began phase II in the Lyman Viaducts project on Dickinson Creek, which will fill in a large scour hole below the twin culverts and restore fish passage after 50+ years. But in dumping stone in the brook, some turbidity is inevitable and anglers are asked to be patient as a turbidity plume may extend all the way down to Comstock Covered Bridge. When completed, this will be a huge benefit for Dickinson Creek, diadromous fish, trout, and the Salmon River.

A very interesting article in the Hartford Courant about an emerging market for Connecticut River American Shad - http://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-bangladesh-shad-20120520_0_6644501.story

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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)	3,094	267	0	119	1	42	6	95
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	45	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	49	28	0	36	3	35	16	0
Whitfords Brook (Whitfords Br., Groton)	0	none seen this week						
Trading Cove Brook (Trading Cove Br., Montville)		none seen this week						
Latimers Brook+ (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)		22,154	(FINAL)					
Gorton Pond** (Pattagansett R., E.Lyme)		96,014	(FINAL)					
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		275,686	(FINAL)					
Fishing Brook** (Fishing Br., O.Saybrook)		5	(FINAL)					
Lower Guilford Lake (East River, Guilford)		none seen this week						
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)		610						
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	4	510	129	6		15	2	
Bunnells Pond (Pegonnock R., Bridgeport)		none seen this week						
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		3,063	142					
Mianus River Pond** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		119,335	12,899			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= 5/31. Taftville= 4/25. Occum= 5/14. Tunnel= 5/08 Kinneytown= 5/30. Haakonsen= 5/30

******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:

No river herring were seen in eastern Connecticut this past week. In western Connecticut, we continue to see some fish: alewives in the Quinnipiac, Mill, and Pequonnock. We also continue to see bluebacks in the Quinnipiac River. Joe reports that he passed an additional 672 bluebacks this past week, stating that the run is winding-down.

Another good week at Kinneytown Fishway! An additional 23 shad screamed past the window giving us a season total thus far of 49 fish. We also counted 27 river herring passing through Kinneytown this past week. Since we were unable to sample these fish to determine species, we will most likely count them as alewife; due to a sample of alewife taken during this time period downstream on the Housatonic River. It appears that years of effort to restore shad and river herring to the Naugatuck River may be finally beginning to take hold. There is certainly good habitat upstream of Kinneytown to support a growing run; especially once we get them past Tingle! The Haakonsen Fishway is still passing fish; adding another 3 shad, 9 alewife, and 13 blueback herring. We also counted a chunky sea-run brown early one morning (see picture below). The shad run seems about over in the Shetucket River although you'll notice that we added another 500 shad to the total. This is due to some in-house corrections not additional fish past since the last report. The same is true for alewife numbers. Up-river at Tunnel Bob Stira reports 45 shad have been lifted at Tunnel—adding to another facility record! We are still waiting for Taftville numbers, although Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) documented a shad successfully ascending the Occum Fishway (upstream of Taftville). Not sure if this shad was one that went through Taftville or was one of the shad that NPU transplanted from the Greenville Fishlift.

Eels- The glass eel run is definitely winding down across the state and the elver and yellow eel run is starting to ramp-up. These older eels will continue to move throughout the summer and into the early fall. Fishing Brook Trap logged an additional 231 glass eels this past week and the count is up to 30,171; a strong run. Greenville Eel Lift, which currently stands at 772 has historically been an elver and yellow eel dominated run (no glass eels ever passed the old eel pass) has passed 12 glass eels this year. Since the lift was installed late spring, we suspect that we simply missed the glass eel season at Greenville and have high hopes for next year's glass eel run. Tunnel has collected around 100; Mill River is starting to pick-up steam and now stands at 196. The Byram River Eel Pass is up to 25.

Dr David Post (Yale) has done some real intriguing work showing how evolution can shape our environment. In this case, it is the evolution of alewife (from sea-run form to landlocked form) shaping the evolution in some Connecticut lakes - <http://news.yale.edu/2012/05/22/not-one-way-street-evolution-shapes-environment-connecticut-lakes>

The New York DEC has announced proposed changes to New York River Herring Regulations. The proposal includes closing all waters other than the Hudson River to the taking of river herring. The Hudson River would remain open under this proposal, but would establish a recreational angling season with creel limits and increased commercial restrictions including net use and size, establish a 36 hour no-fishing escapement period, and increase in the commercial reporting requirement. The public comment period runs through July 16 (see attached).

Click here <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MljQ19096KY&feature=youtu.be> to view a real neat video of the Damariscotta alewife festival

As you know, Steve is attending the annual NASCO meeting and will continue this report once he returns, in the meantime I will put together next's weeks report. You can email reports to me at timothy.wildman@ct.gov.



A healthy looking 22"+ brown trout (probably sea-run) making an early morning foray through the Haakonsen Fishway on the Quinnipiac River in Wallingford.