

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: May 14, 2013



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/r5src. 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)	1	53	0	5	0	0	1,803*	2	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0***	0	0
StanChem (Mattabesset)	-	0	460	23	6	0	13	8	0
Moulson Pond (Eightmile)	0	1	~550	~500	0	0	0***	0	-
Mary Steube+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	8,366	-	-	-	-	-	-
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	2	2,460	0	0	0	0	253	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	27/0	195,879	0	15	37	9	9,109	0	0
Turners Falls (Connecticut- MA)	0/0	4,018	-	0	0	0	301	-	-
Vernon (Connecticut- VT)	0/0	69	-	0	0	0	28		
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=	30/0	198,393	~9,376	~543	43	9	11,178	10	0
(last year's totals)	47/10	499,935	>25,057	>7,039	504	303	15,193	11	0

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:

The runs of salmon, shad and lamprey on the river are picking up. All salmon have been captured at Holyoke and taken to the Richard Cronin National Salmon Station for breeding but shad and lamprey are already moving through the Vernon fishway. Still low numbers but it is pretty early for these fish to be passing through Vernon. Good passage is occurring at Holyoke and Turners Falls. Some small salmon that had never gone to sea were picked up at Holyoke and one was added to the count previously. These salmon have been released and the count adjusted. All salmon counted at this time are sea return salmon. You can see that West Springfield has trapped two and Rainbow has seen two but as of now have only trapped one. It is too early to say much about the blueback herring run. We're not seeing any at Leesville, only a few down below at Rainbow and the numbers logged at Holyoke are typical of past years. We didn't get a report from Moulson Pond this week so I don't know what they saw. The USFWS and CTDEEP worked together on transplanting blueback herring from Wethersfield Cove to the Oxbow (MA) once again this past week. We are still not seeing the large numbers we saw in the cove a couple of years ago so netting is not that efficient. To date, the USFWS has moved 1,120 blueback herring into the Oxbow. The rain last week was not evenly distributed. The Salmon River came up and we started seeing more fish, including three nice tiger trout in the trap. But other tributaries did not see the same pick-up and the mainstem Connecticut River is still only 11,000 cfs—quite low for spring. The cold nights are keeping the water temperatures low—the mainstem is at 15.5 C (60 F). This will help prolong the shad and blueback runs and perhaps allow more to get farther upstream into VT and NH. Low flows may also assist the fish in locating the fishway entrances, which can be a challenge at big dams in big rivers. We had the last of our new fishway dedications last Thursday with the celebration of the StanChem Dam on the Mattabessett River. We have been reporting on this fishway previously and you can see from the table above, it is passing fish—including lots of non-anadromous fish not listed. DEEP Commissioner Dan Esty was able to join in the celebration and share his thoughts. Kudos to Jack Waller and his StanChem staff for hosting a great event—and of course to Sally Harold and The Nature Conservancy for their project management and co-sponsorship of the event. For news coverage: <http://www.courant.com/community/berlin/>



Dedication of the StanChem Fishway: Sally Harold- TNC Project Manager, DEEP Commissioner Dan Esty, Frogard Ryan, State Director, TNC- CT Chapter.



Blow up this photo to see StanChem's fishway cake!



Ken Sprankle and USFWS crew net blueback herring in Wethersfield Cove. Release into Oxbow below.



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)	752	633	0	2	0	0	2	0
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	51	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	63	55	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	2	35	0	17	0	104	1	0
Whitfords Brook (Whitfords Br., Groton)		.						
Trading Cove Brook (Trading Cove Br., Montville)								
Hallville Pond* ** (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	6	0	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook+ (Latimers Br., E. Lyme)		33,065 final						
Gorton Pond** (Pattagansett R., E. Lyme)		11,049						
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E. Lyme)		363,224 final						
Clarks Pond (Indian River, Milford)		167	(more fish seen below this week but no updated report)					
Lower Guilford Lake (East River, Guilford)		0						
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)		550	(slowing down; last week of counting?)					
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	2,670		17	0	128	1	0
Bunnells Pond (Pegonnock R., Bridgeport)		~20,000 estimated						
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		31,752	(problems with counter)					
Mianus River Pond** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		61,654	(No report this week)					

**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= 5/01 Taftville=5/12 Occum= x/x Tunnel= 5/12 Kinneytown= 5/9 Haakonsen=5/1 Hallville= 5/8

***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:

There are lots of stories reflected in the data in the table above. The shad run on the Shetucket is strong and Greeneville is passing a lot. Our counts are nearly two weeks behind and during those two weeks, lots of shad have been lifted, so expect that number to climb. Both Taftville and Tunnel fishways have passed more shad than ever before. We haven't even begun to look at Occum video due to staff shortages but once June arrives, we hope to tackle that backlog. We worked with FirstLight Power and Norwich Public Utility on shad tagging at Greeneville (both radio tags and PIT) to assist with FirstLight studies of Taftville and Tunnel. NPU has trucked over 100 shad above Taftville and Occum and hopes to do more in the coming days. During the tagging, some river herring were lifted and upon examination they were found to be blueback herring—a species not lifted at Greeneville in several years. Those data will appear in future reports as we get caught up. Greeneville is also passing a bunch of white perch and salmon broodstock (upstream trophy fishery). The big mystery has been the absence of sea lamprey. Other streams seem to be having good (and early) lamprey runs. We think that most of the alewife runs to the east are over but another big wave seems to be working its way through western Long Island Sound. Significant runs were observed in the Housatonic, Mianus, Sasco, Mill (Fairfield), Pequonnock, Indian (Milford), and West (Guilford). The Wood Dam Fishway (Saugatuck) counted a lot this past week and we assume that Mianus Pond Fishway also did but we were not able to get an updated report for this week. Last week we reported a large school of alewives trapped below the apron at Glenwood Park on the Pequonnock River in Bridgeport and how crews build a sandbag wall to funnel the flow and allow fish to move up. During the week, the all seemed to have moved up and used the Bunnells Pond Fishway, so we feel good about getting those fish home. The Nature Conservancy's fish counter at Wood Dam Fishway has been acting a bit squirrely lately—especially tube 5 which is giving super high (unrealistic) counts, which we have been ignoring. Today, Dave Ellis is meeting with Sally and staff to switch out counters (installing a different one that is no longer needed at its assigned location) in hopes that we might get more accurate counts toward the end of the runs.

Downrunning spent alewives continue to be seen in New London County. A highlight for Jim and Sandra at the Tributary Mill Conservancy in Old Lyme was the appearance of a river otter going after some of the downrunning alewives. They report water temperatures of 18 C (64 F). These cold nights should cool that down a bit for a while. The glass eel run in Old Lyme and elsewhere seems to be slowing down. See data below:

Eel Counts: Fishing Brook= 5,504 (mostly glass), Greeneville= 652 (222= glass), Lower Millpond= 5,345 (most were glass).



One never tires of showing up at a stream and seeing a school of river herring hanging out. This is Latimer Brook just above the I-95 culvert and below the fishway. These fish eventually went up the fishway.



Dave Ellis of the Inland Fisheries Division measures an American shad at the Greeneville Fishlift in preparation of it receiving a tag as part of FirstLight Power passage studies. Bob Stira of FirstLight is off camera to the left.