

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: May 20, 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	50	0	6	0	0	1,571*	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	~2,150	0	0	0***	0	-
Mary Steube+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	9,137 (FINAL)-	-	-	-	-	-	-
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	2	2,539	0	0	0	0	255	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	32/0	270,798	0	134	125	26	14,291	0	0
Turners Falls (Connecticut- MA)	0/0	10,788	-	0	0	0	1,201	-	-
Vernon (Connecticut- VT)	0/0	4,577	-	0	0	0	245		
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=	35/0	273,309	~9,376	~2,313	131	26	16,128	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:

I have to start by mentioning that I did not get a report from Darleen today so my data on Turners Falls and West Springfield is not updated from last week. The Vernon numbers may be old, too. Note the number of shad passing through Vernon. That's real good for this time of year and indicates the number of shad through Turners Falls may be much larger. Plus, we were unable to view more video for the new StanChem Fishway on the Matabesset River so those numbers are the same as last week. We'll try to update them for next week. Overall, runs have slowed down a bit (maybe other than shad) due to dropping water temperatures. Last week the temperatures at Leesville were 15 to 18 C (60 – 64 F). Yesterday I snorkeled Leesville and the temperature was less than 14 C (57 F)—going in the wrong direction! But these cool temperatures will also prolong the runs, as well. Snorkeling was interesting—some early season fish are still around—we have male white suckers with spawning colors and a few salmon smolts passing through—but we already have spawning sea lamprey and smallmouth bass (guarding eggs). Also more white perch than we've seen in years. The lamprey run seems to have been early everywhere—here, in MA (per Ben Gahagan), and in Maine (per Dan Kircheis). Also at Leesville, large schools of spottail shiners making it all the way to the fishway, probably due to the low flows and velocities. What has been MIA all season long at Leesville has been river herring. The place should be alive with blueback herring this time of year but we haven't seen any. The Lyme Land Conservation Trust reports plenty in the Eightmile River (Moulson Pond Fishway) but the Salmon River has been dead all spring long. There are striped bass in the river but not as many as in past years—probably the lack of river herring. Speaking of stripers, Bob Jones shared this link to a Miramichi blog that reports a horde of striped bass being taken in the lower Miramichi River (premier salmon river) in New Brunswick: <http://miramichifishingreports.blogspot.com/> Nine more salmon came in but captures seem to have slowed down a bit. Rich Murray of Holyoke Gas & Electric also reports the capture of a shortnose sturgeon at the Holyoke Fishlift on May 19 at 9:00 pm. I reported last week on our dedication of the new StanChem Fishway on the Matabessett River. Here's one more article about it; Marty Armstrong's column in the Stamford Advocate: <http://www.stamfordadvocate.com/default/article/Fishing-Column-Shad-fishing-making-a-comeback-4527250.php>. Last week I failed to ridicule the TV show "River Monsters". Each week this show highlights some weird and strange creature from rivers like huge crocodiles, snakes, mudpuppies or other oddities. They often end the piece by mentioning that all of these species play an important role in the ecosystem and may be worthy of caution but not disdain. Bruce Williams of our staff recently saw an episode that focused on sea lamprey and they were implying that they attack humans (they don't) and they did not make that caveat at the end about them being beneficial to the ecosystem. What nonsense. If your friends or members of your organization bring this up, educate them. Sea lampreys on the East Coast are native, harmless and good for our ecosystem. Let 'em go upstream with all the other species!!!!



I don't have any good new photos to run so I thought I'd share with you a sign of the season—smoked shad! Couple this with your favorite beverage of the hopped, malted brew variety and you have feast.



Some one sent me this. Probably from Maine where eels are a hot commodity.

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)	2,371	699	0	10	3	0	2	0
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	67	56	0	1	0	0	0	3,250
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	5	70	0	44	0	123	2	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)		173						
Lower Guilford Lake (East River, Guilford)		0						
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)		563						
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	4,281		19	0	155	1	0
Bunnells Pond (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)		~20,000 estimated						
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		31,753 (problems with counter)						
Mianus River Pond** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		69,074	12,449					

**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= 5/07 Taftville=5/17 Occum= x/x Tunnel= 5/17 Kinneytown= 5/15 Haakonsen=5/14 Hallville= 5/17

***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:

In the east, the only alewife action we have seen has been in the Pattagansett River. However, we're still seeing alewives in the west, notably in the Mill (Fairfield), Housatonic, Pequonnock, and West (Guilford). Joe Cassone has documented blueback herring coming up the Mianus Pond Fishway in Greenwich (all alewives are now coming down) but we have yet to document them elsewhere in the west, although we suspect them. Alert biologist Scott Williams (Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station) reports the West River (New Haven) was full of river herring on Saturday, at Edgewood Park and by the tennis center, south of Whalley Ave. We don't know if these are alewife or blueback herring but in the past, alewives have always outnumbered bluebacks in this stream, likely due to the habitat type. These fish are obviously taking advantage of the self-regulating tide gates installed last year by Save the Sound. We will be looking upstream of Whalley Ave. but would love to hear reports from partners from Blake Street, Ramsdell St., Pond Lily fishway and even Konolds Pond. We know we passed some blueback herring at Greenville because when we were over there tagging shad with FirstLight, Norwich Public Utilities, and Kleinschmidt Associates, we saw some get lifted but we haven't reviewed the video for those days yet. The numbers of alewives passing the Haakonsen Fishway in Wallingford (Quinnipiac River) would be greater if it wasn't for some poachers netting fish right at the mouth of the fishway in broad daylight—in full view of three busy streets. Friends from that area—keep an eye out for these bums and if you see them, call our TIP line to dispatch law enforcement officials: 1-800-424-3333. Even get town police to hold them until our EnCon officers can arrive.

In the Connecticut River section I mentioned seeing more white perch at Leesville than in recent years. We are also passing more at Kinneytown, Greenville, and StanChem. Still passing white suckers at many locations (e.g. 463 at Kinneytown and 466 at StanChem) and Greenville has passed 21 Atlantic salmon broodstock (for the fishery) and Kinneytown has passed 3.

If you want to see a video of Jim Turek (NOAA Restoration Center) explaining the new nature-like fishway on the Acushnet River in New Bedford, MA, go to <http://youtu.be/xNdQT8Bn9IE>. Also, for an interesting article in the Washington Post on fish movement, check out

http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/worlds-fish-have-been-moving-to-cooler-waters-for-decades-study-finds/2013/05/15/730292e8-bcd7-11e2-9b09-1638acc3942e_story.html?hpid=z4

Eel Counts: Fishing Brook= 6315 (mostly glass), Greenville= 698 (222= glass), Lower Millpond= 5,607 (all this week were glass with no pigmentation).



The old camera housing at Kinneytown fishway was wooden, dilapidated and unsecure. Tim Wildman designed a new one which was fabricated out of aluminum and Tim installed it with assistance from Anel- North America, the hydro operator. Note lack of spill over the dam.



...and this is what the images look like on the SalmonSoft software. Here's a slug of alewives passing the window on May 10 at 7:30 pm.