

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: April 4, 2018



This is a report generated by the Connecticut Department of 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/r5cfc. 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	STURGEON/ TROUT++	AMER. EEL
Rainbow* (Farmington)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0**	0	0
StanChem* (Mattabesett)	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
West Springfield (Westfield-MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut-MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manhan River* (Manhan-MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turners Falls* (Connecticut-MA)	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
Wilder* (Connecticut-VT)	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
Other (all sites)	0								
TOTALS=	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(last year's totals)	19	392,057	8,606	922	800	230	23,955	1/9	20

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.

*There is a video camera that records passage. 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. ++Shortnose Sturgeon (Holyoke)/Sea-run Trout (other locations) 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 fish runs start later on the Connecticut River (this section) than the coastal rivers (the next section). The river is running at about 35,000 cubic feet per second (cfs), which is just about average for this time of year. But it is still real cold. I just came back from New Hampshire last night and there is still plenty of snow up there and in Vermont, so the river will continue to run high and cold. Shad don't enter rivers until the water temperature reaches 50 degrees, so it may be a while yet. We have not opened fishways yet so we can concentrate on opening the coastal fishways. We have very little to report for the Connecticut River, this week, so most of the news is in the next section.

However, remember that this year **WORLD FISH MIGRATION DAY** is Saturday, April 21. We have fourteen events happening in Connecticut (and more elsewhere). To see what is happening in Connecticut, go to <http://www.ctriversalmon.org/world-fish-migration-day-in-connecticut/> and to see what is happening worldwide (and CT), go to <https://www.worldfishmigrationday.com/>. I will continue to promote this in the next couple of weeks but make plans to visit some of these sites now. I hope to see you there.

Each year, we finish dam removal and fishway construction projects in the summer after these reports end. So it is customary for me to summarize these projects here while we wait for the fish runs to ramp up. So for our inaugural issue of 2018...

Last summer, the DEEP began the **removal of the Springborn Dam**, on the Scantic River in Enfield. The dam was owned by the DEEP. The project, funded in part by a Hurricane Sandy Resiliency Grant from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, opened up 2.5 miles of the watershed, benefitting American Shad, Alewife, Blueback Herring, Sea Lamprey, American Eel, and wild Brook Trout. Wild trout below the old dam can now mingle with wild trout in the upstream portions of the watershed. Also, important was the elimination of a public safety risk (the dam was in bad shape) and the removal of a lot of contaminated sediment. This project was many years in the planning. Engineering was done by Fuss & O'Neill and construction by Paganelli of Windsor Locks. Another complication was the need to protect the footings of an old railroad bridge support pier. The bridge had to be jacked up by less than a half inch so the airline fuel pipeline that was attached to the bridge wouldn't break! It was all finally completed last month and the river looks great. This bedrock gorge is now exposed and the Scantic River Watershed Association just held its annual canoe race with new rapids to run and no nasty portage! This was the largest dam removal in our state to date and cost over \$5 million. Congratulations to project Manager Ashley Stewart and her team on a very successful project.



The Springborn Dam was over 20 feet high and a complete barrier to migratory fishes. The impoundment was full of contaminated sediment and debris.



The dam is lowered and water diverted to one side.



Upper- The old dam site, looking down from a window in the mill building. The top of the dam was just to the right of the white line in the top of the photo. Lower- the upper part of the old impoundment, with bedrock streambed and stable banks. The Rt. 191 bridge is seen in the background.

OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

FISHWAY (RIVER)	AMER. <u>SHAD</u>	<u>ALEWIFE</u>	BLUEBACK <u>HERRING</u>	GIZZARD <u>SHAD</u>	STRIPED <u>BASS</u>	SEA <u>LAMPREY</u>	SEA-RUN <u>TROUT</u>	AMER. <u>EEL</u>
Greeneville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	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
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Jordan Brook ** (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	65	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gorton Pond** (Pattagansett R., East Lyme)		0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		44,000						
Chapmans Pond* (Menunketesuck R., Clinton)		1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)		0	0	0	-	-	-	-
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		0	0	-	-	-	-	-
Haakonsen Fishway* 0 (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac River, Meriden)		0	0	0	-	0	-	0
Bunnells Pond* (Pegonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		0	0	-	-	-	-	-
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		0	0	0	0	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= n.a. Taftville= n.a. Occum= n.a. Tunnel= n.a. Kinneytown= n.a. Haakonsen= n.a. Hallville= n.a. Hanover= n.a.

Bunnells= 6/20. 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.

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:

We first detected Alewives at Bride Brook during those warm days at the end of February. Then March got cold and snowy and the run stopped. EXACTLY LIKE LAST YEAR (but with more snow). Fish started to trickle in two weeks ago but the rate picked up and over the weekend we counted 20,000. You can see that we counted a few at Latimer Brook and one at Chapman Pond. Also, Jon Vander Werff with Save the Sound has counted over 100 passing upstream through the old Hyde Pond Dam impoundment on Whitford Brook. We assume the fish are throughout New London County at this point. I have not confirmed that Greenville is lifting yet but expect updates on the Shetucket River next week. We have had unconfirmed reports of Alewives in the Mill River in Fairfield. We expect to open Saugatuck River fishways tomorrow and may see more sign down there. Reports from NY indicate they're seeing Alewives in the Peconic River on the Island and MA reporting Alewives in the Nemasket and Acushnet rivers and Stony and Herring brooks. Even some in the Merrimack already.

We stocked sea-run brown trout smolts in both Latimer Brook and the Menunketesuck River this past week. The fish have adipose fin clips and if you catch one, let us know. We'll be monitoring the fishways for returning adult trout from past years' stockings.

The glass eel run is beginning and those numbers will just go up in the coming weeks.

The Archimedes Screw Generator at the Hanover Pond Dam on the Quinnipiac River in Meriden has had some technical problems and has been shut down but New England Hydro hopes to resume operation by May. The fishway will be opened soon, regardless. First Light Power has completed their brand new fish lift at the Scotland Dam on the Shetucket River and will be having a ribbon cutting on World Fish Migration Day. I will be talking more about that project in the coming weeks.

I hope you'll join us at one or more sites on **World Fish Migration Day**, April 21, the day before Earth Day. For a listing of events, go to <https://www.worldfishmigrationday.com/> or <http://www.ctriversalmon.org/world-fish-migration-day-in-connecticut/>.

There will be an opportunity to send in letters supporting river herring conservation to the New England Fisheries Management Council soon. I will put a notice in this report when the public comment period opens. The river herring community on the Cape has let its voice be heard loud and clear and we think that it is appropriate for people in Connecticut and the Connecticut River valley who care about river herring to also speak up.

Glass eels- Fishing Brook = a few dozen; Chapmans Pond= operational but no data yet; Mill River Eel Trap= not operational yet; Greenville Eel Lift= not operational yet; Lower Millpond (Old Lyme)= not operational yet.

My weekly Diadromous Fish Radio show is live on iCRV (www.icrvradio.com) at 8:00 am on Wednesday and re-played at 3:00 and 7:00 pm that day 8 am on Saturday. iCRV now archives shows so if you miss one, you can go online and click on "Outdoors" and the "Fishing" and find past shows to listen to.



Sea-run brown trout smolts being released into the Menunketesuck River.



Staff setting up the trap and the fish counting array at Bride Lake in East Lyme. Seasonal staff (in back) Kirk McPherson, (in blue) Shannon Simpson, (to right) Peter Grundy.