

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT
 Report Date: April 2, 2019



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.ctiversalmon.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* (Mattabesset)	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	present	-	-	-	-	-	- -
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
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	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
(last year's totals)	2	281,328	7,326	1,079	99	268	23,955	91/0	2,083

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:

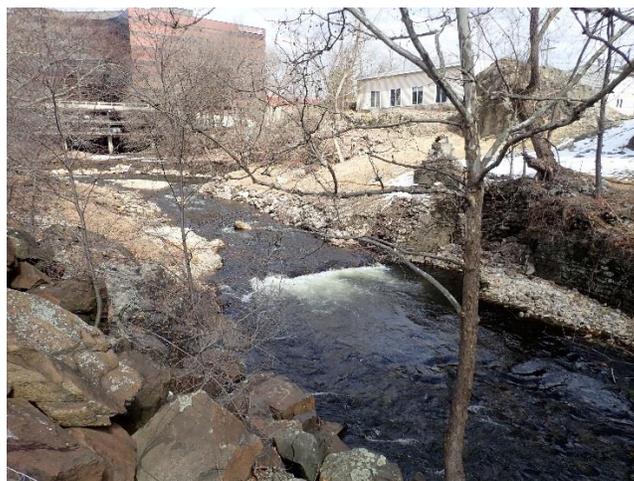
A comment on the previous table. If you compare the row of numbers for “Last Year’s Totals” with the totals offered in the last report (July) from last year, they will not all agree. Data for many of the columns were checked and updated over the summer. Note in particular the numbers of Shortnose Sturgeon lifted at Holyoke. Only eleven of those had been lifted when these reports ended in July. Most sturgeon seem to come up in the summer and fall.

The Connecticut River is still in winter mode at 5 C (41 F) but the flow is 51,500 cfs, which is similar to spring freshet. Vermont got snow over the weekend so there is still a lot of water destined to come down. It’s been reported that they hope to open the Holyoke Dam Fishlift next week but that can only be operated at flows less than 40,000 cfs. Engineers with the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) are conducting their pre-season checks of fishways before they are opened. Caleb Slater from Mass Wildlife reports that the Westfield Fishway on the Westfield River was opened today. We won’t be opening Rainbow, Leesville, and StanChem until the 15th. However, the Alewives have already entered the river. The big excitement is Mill Brook in Old Lyme. We have three fishways on that tributary stream (Mary Steube, Upper Millpond, Rogers Lake) to provide access to historical spawning habitat in Rogers Lake. We have never had Alewives make it all the way up through all three fishways and make it into the lake. We have been trucking Alewives into the lake to promote restoration and support research conducted by David Post’s lab at Yale on the “secondary contact” of anadromous and landlocked Alewives. Yesterday, an early wave of Alewives came up from the Connecticut River, and flew past all three fishways in one day. We did not get a good count at Mary Steube due to beaver debris in the counter but there were about 40 below Rogers Lake Dam this morning and most passed up the fishway after our guy Kevin Job adjusted the fishway boards. A better count will be provided next week but we are encouraged by the early and energetic start of the run—even with some beaver dams! This just in! Ken Sprankle of the USFWS began electrofishing for river herring today on the Mattabesset River and captured 34 Alewives and one shad. The shad is a huge surprise—very early. But the presence of Alewives up to Middletown means they could be just about anywhere in the river. We may re-think our opening date for StanChem. More Alewife news in the next section.

There won’t be a lot to report for the Connecticut River for a while so we’ll continue our practice of telling you what went on last year after these reports ended. A huge project was **the removal of the Flock Process Dam**, the first on the Norwalk River in Norwalk. This had been in the planning stage for years. It was sponsored by the City of Norwalk (congratulations to Alexis Cherichetti) with both Hurricane Sandy grant money and some so-called 319 funds from the DEEP. The removal opened up 3.5 miles of good habitat for river herring, sea-run trout, and eels—and maybe someday shad??? The impoundment used to go up to the Merritt Parkway near its intersection with Rt. 7 and the newly exposed streambed looks fantastic. Mother Nature has begun to shape it in her own fashion and the gravel bars with large boulders will be a trout’s dream. It is hemmed in by private property so hard to go see but if you know that area of Norwalk and know where the Merritt 7 office complex is, pay them a visit and look off the back of their parking deck. Now the fish are stopped by the Merwin Meadows Dam in Wilton—and it’s in our crosshairs. Stay tuned.



Katherine Littrell of Yale University holds the first Alewife known to have swum up all three Mill Brook Fishways into Rogers Lake. She and a colleague fin clipped it for genetic analysis as part of the ongoing study of the recolonization of Rogers Lake.



The site of the former Flock Process Dam (where the whitewater drop is). There is good passage along the left side of the stream.

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)	0	1	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
Scotland* (Shetucket R. Windham)	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	
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Jordan Brook ** (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	6	0	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	50	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		21,665						
Chapmans Pond* (Menunketesuck R., Clinton)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		39	0	-	-	-	-	-
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac River, Meriden)		0	0	0	-	0	-	0
Clarks Pond Fishway*** (Indian River, Milford)		0						
Bunnells Pond* (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		255	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= 4/2 Taftville= 4/2 Occum= na Tunnel= 4/2 Kinneytown= na Haakonsen= na Hallville= na Hanover= na Bunnells= na Chapmans= na

***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. ***These are counts made by a volunteer when he is present and represents an index not a census. 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:

The Alewives are in and although we are only seeing strong numbers at Bride Brook (our premier run), the other runs that have registered fish are early by traditional standards, considering that the water is still cold at 7 C (45 F). Our crew has spent a lot of time pulling out beaver dams and re-building 'kiddy dams' to guide fish to fishways. Fans of the Eightmile River—we finally were able to rebuild the one by the Moulson Pond Fishway and we are eager to see if numbers go up this year. None of our video stations are up yet—very soon—but most of the electronic fish counters are in place, at least from Rhode Island border to the Quinnipiac River. We'll be tackling the others in the next few days. In addition to the numbers reported in the table above, Jon from Save the Sound reports the first two Alewives in Whitford Brook, as he continues to monitor the former Hyde Pond Dam site. Volunteer monitors and others in charge of fishways—you should be opening fishways and starting your watch.

Elsewhere, we are getting reports of fish on Long Island and tributaries of the Hudson. A few fish have shown up on the Essex River in Essex, MA. Speaking of the Hudson, John Waldman reports an excellent 15 minute film "Undamming the Hudson" on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sg2wxsYtzOs>

Tim has stocked this year's sea-run Brown Trout smolts (Finnish strain) into the Menunketesuck River and Latimers Brook. Bruce will be stocking this year crop of Atlantic Salmon fry into parts of the Salmon and Farmington rivers starting next week. Kevin was supposed to start transplanting Alewives from Bride Brook to targeted streams and ponds today but there weren't enough fish in the trap so maybe tomorrow. We just started seeing glass eels- see the section below. I'll be presenting a "Meet Your Greens" talk for the Rockfall Foundation at the Griswold Inn in Essex at 5:30 pm on April 18 (<https://www.rockfallfoundation.org/about-us/meet-your-greens/>)

Eel Counts- Fishing Brook = 2 glass/0 yellow; Chapmans Pond= 0 glass/0 yellow; Mill River Eel Trap= 0 glass/0 yellow; Hanover Pond= 0 yellow; Greeneville Eel Lift= 0 glass/0 yellow. Occum= 0 yellow eels; Kinneytown= 0 yellow. The number shown on the previous page for Tunnel is for its eel pass, not the lift, and all fish are elvers or yellow.

My weekly Diadromous Fish Radio show is live on iCRV (www.iCRVradio.com) at 8:00 am on Wednesdays. If you can't tune in at 8:00 am, listen to it at any time: www.icrvradio.com/programs/program/50.



The beaver are gone from Crystal Lake in Old Saybrook so seasonal Matt Augusto and crew tuned up that Town-owned nature-like fishway. Fish that pass through the Fishing Brook Fishway can swim up another mile or so and enter Crystal Lake via this fishway.



Loading Sea-run Brown Trout at the Burlington State Fish hatchery. Loading the fish are hatchery workers Rob Castrogiovanni and the legendary Joe Ravita.