

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: June 18, 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 visit the USFWS website at www.fws.gov/r5crc. 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	266	1	0	0	0	581	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0**	0	0
StanChem* (Mattabesset)	0	1	62	5	46	-	11	0	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	4	13	51	0	0	5	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	11,232	FINAL	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	285	FINAL -	-	-	-	-	-
West Springfield (Westfield- MA)	0	3,965	0	5	0	0	225	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	2	310,221	0	5,051	515	161	16,389	2	0
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	TBA	0	0
Turners Falls* (Connecticut- MA)	0	20,983	-	1	0	0	1,770	-	-
Vernon* (Connecticut- VT)	0	5,577	-	0	0	0	11	-	0
Bellows Falls* (Connecticut- VT)	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
Wilder* (Connecticut- VT)	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
Other (all sites)	0								
TOTALS=	2	314,457	11,308	5,112	561	161	17,191	2	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:

Despite all of the recent rain, the river discharge remains near the long-term average. While the runs of American Shad and Blueback Herring are clearly winding down, the counts of Sea Lamprey jumped up this past week. We ended our shad trucking into Connecticut the previous week due to high water temperatures in Connecticut but this past week we transported Sea Lamprey from Holyoke and released them in Connecticut streams. More on that below in the next section. Another run has begun—Shortnose Sturgeon. We've been wondering when we would see them and the first two were passed at Holyoke this past week. Those numbers should continue to rise throughout the summer, after these reports end. In last week's report, a third Atlantic Salmon was added to the Holyoke tally. I have now removed that fish and put the number back at two. A nineteen-inch Atlantic Salmon is not a sea-run fish. We're not sure where this fish came from, but its passport clearly did not have a Greenland stamp on it.

Sea Lamprey and American Shad continue to move up through upriver fishways (i.e. Turners Falls and Vernon). The data for Vernon is as of June 3. Video for Bellows Falls has not yet been reviewed. The water temperature remains cool farther upstream so these fish may have a chance to keep going upstream for a while before they stop and spawn. Melissa Grader reports that many Sea Lampreys have been seen at on the Manhan River below the dam so once the video backlog is viewed, we expect that fishway to register some numbers. Sea Lamprey is about all that is still running at the Rainbow Fishway. We've reviewed the video only up to June 2 and it will be interesting to see what happens to the numbers after the chemical spill into the lower Farmington River. On June 8, a malfunction in a fire suppression system at a private hangar at Bradley International Airport released an estimated 50,000 gallons of a mixture of perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFAS) foam and water. PFAS are used to combat chemical and fuel fires. The mixture flowed into the sewer system, down to a secondary treatment plant in Windsor, and then into the Farmington River. Our department is still dealing with it. I don't have any personal knowledge of this suite of chemicals but if you look at the name, it cannot be good for diadromous fish. Many heavy metals and hydrocarbons are known to interfere with the ability of anadromous fish to home to natal streams, even at concentrations well below lethal levels.

While things are slowing down here on the Connecticut River, things are heating up farther north in Maine. The Milford Lift on the Penobscot is up to 240 salmon and nearly two million river herring, although the shad count of 358 is still lower than the 544 on the Narraguagus. The river count on the Sebasticook is 3.2 million and the St. Croix at Milltown is approaching a half million, as that system begins to recover from the disastrous 19-year long fishway closure beginning in the mid-1980s. The run had declined to 900 fish.

I spent a couple of hours last night on the Connecticut River with Matt Devine and Lian Guo and their crews from UMass last night as they sampled young-of-year Blueback Herring in Chapmans Pond with a purse seine. The rain held off and it was a full moon—lovely night on the river. The fish ranged in size from 12 – 29 mm. And they'll be extracting otoliths to age the fish!



Jake Rawlings of our crew prepares to receive another shad off the truck as staff from Kleinschmidt Associates tag a shad destined for release into the Quinnipiac River upstream of the Hanover Pond Dam. Pat Wendt from New England Hydro Company looks on. The shad came from the Holyoke Fishlift.



The government of Norway has actively promoted the International Year of the Salmon. This was one of three video briefs rotating on screens in the Oslo International Airport.

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)	807	699	0	19	0	0	0	0
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Scotland* (Shetucket R. Windham)	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	2	33	0	0	0	0	0	9
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	0	0	0	0	52	0	0
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	16	Final	2	-	0	0	0
Jordan Brook ** (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	116	Final	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	26,390	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		296,703	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Fishing Brook** (Fishing Brook, OSaybrook)		14,279	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Chapmans Pond* (Menunketesuck R., Clinton)		5	Final	0	0	0	0	0
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)	385		Final	-	-	-	-	-
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		364	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	3	2,070	41	18	1	560	0	0
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac River, Meriden)		4	0	0	-	321	-	1
Clarks Pond Fishway*** (Indian River, Milford)		541	Final	-	-	-	-	-
Bunnells Pond* (Pegonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	12,340	Final	1	0	61	0	-
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		6,030	21,746	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= 6/16 Taftville= 6/10 Occum= 6/17 Tunnel= 6/10 Scotland= 6/10 Kinneytown= 6/16 Haakonsen= 6/16 Hallville= 6/2 Hanover= 5/23 Bunnells= 6/14 Chapmans= 5/21These 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:

We have pulled most of our fish counting gear for the season. Monitoring is still continuing on the larger streams like the Shetucket/Quinebaug, Quinnipiac, and Naugatuck rivers. We have left some of the smaller fishways open even without counting capability where the fishway is the best opportunity for effective downstream passage for downrunning fish, like the young-of-year. There is still plenty of water in our streams so that we can leave these fishways open without fear of drawing down the level of the pond. By the time the real low flows arrive in the summer, we will close the fishways completely. Although many of the anadromous runs are just about over, the fishways are still providing passage for non-anadromous species. For example, at Hanover Pond (Quinnipiac), they have passed 45 brown trout, 5 Brook Trout, 191 White Suckers, 11 Carp, 1 Channel Catfish, and 6 Smallmouth Bass. Occum has passed 10 eels (in the Denil), 52 Smallmouth Bass, 142 Bluegill, 111 Atlantic Salmon (broodstock), 60 trout, 8 White Suckers, 31 Yellow Perch, 1 Black Crappie, and 17 Fallfish. Tunnel (Quinebaug) has passed 9 eels, 19 trout, 48 bass, 2 Yellow Perch, 114 sunfish, 2 Black Crappie, 3 White Suckers, 4 Carp, 3 catfish, and 1 Walleye. Scotland (Shetucket River) has lifted 102 White Suckers, 12 Yellow Perch, 27 Fallfish, 38 bass, 2,321 sunfish, 2 Black Crappie, 95 trout, and 31 American Eel. Note that it is often difficult to identify the exact species of trout, sunfish or bass, particularly at Scotland where the fish are moving quickly past the camera.

Past work has shown that streams that lost Sea Lamprey runs will not regain them without seeding the streams with fish. We have successfully re-started runs on the Naugatuck and Pequonnock rivers by transplanting pre-spawned adult lampreys, which then spawn and produce larvae that produce pheromones that then attract adult lamprey from the ocean in subsequent years. This year, we have begun re-seeding the Shetucket River by releasing 50-80 lamprey into Merrick, Beaver, and Indian Hollow brooks (all upstream of Occum). Note that one lamprey was counted passing upstream in the Occum Fishway. It is likely it dropped down over the dam and then went back up. We also released lamprey in the Norwalk (between Dana and Cannondale dams) and Saugatuck (between Dorr's Mill and Low's dams) rivers. Some of the fish came from the Rainbow Fishway but others came from the Holyoke fishlift.

Eel Counts- Fishing Brook = 54,988 glass/189 yellow; Chapmans Pond= 79,663 glass/814 yellow; Mill River Eel Trap= 3,895 glass/66 yellow; Hanover Pond= 499 yellow; Greeneville Eel Lift= 37 glass/136 yellow; Occum= 7 yellow eel; Tunnel= 854 yellow; Kinneytown= 0 yellow, Lower Millpond= 18 glass/0 yellow.

THIS JUST IN- NOAA will publish in tomorrow's Federal Register its determination that the listing of Alewife or Blueback Herring, range-wide or any specific DPS, is not warranted at this time. More on this in future reports.

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.



Interns with the Greenwich Conservation Commission dipnet river herring out of the Mianus Pond Fishway. This fishway has runs of both Alewife and Blueback Herring but the electronic fish counter cannot distinguish them. So to estimate the numbers of each species, subsamples are netted weekly and examined.



Seasonal employee Charlie Dykes releases pre-spawned Sea Lamprey into Beaver Brook in Sprague, upstream of two dams targeted for removal. This brook has excellent spawning and nursery habitat for this species.