

FISHING REPORT NUMBER 26

10/15/2009



IMPORTANT REMINDER TO SPORTSMEN

Pursuant to the recently adopted state budget (Public Act 09-3 – June Special Session):

- **FISHING, HUNTING AND TRAPPING LICENSE AND PERMIT FEES HAVED INCREASED (effective October 1, 2009). This includes both recreational and commercial fishing fees.**
- Among the other fees that increased on October 1, 2009, are state park and forest fees, including parking fees, season passes and camping fees.
- Fishing & hunting license and permit fees are available at www.ct.gov/dep.

INLAND REPORT

2009 FALL BROODSTOCK ATLANTIC SALMON ARE BEING STOCKED THIS WEEK

- DEP's Inland Fisheries Division is stocking **1,100 2-5 lb broodstock Atlantic salmon** into the **SHETUCKET RIVER** and the **NAUGATUCK RIVER**. An additional **200 salmon** will be released into **CRYSTAL LAKE** (Ellington) and **MOUNT TOM POND** (Morris/Litchfield/Washington), 100 fish into each lake.
- **All the broodstock Atlantic salmon available for stocking in Connecticut this fall will be stocked this week (October 13th-16th).** This is a departure from previous years of the program, when smaller batches of salmon were stocked on multiple occasions from mid-October into late November. This change is necessitated by the need to conduct essential maintenance of hatchery ponds at the Kensington State Fish Hatchery.
- For the third consecutive year, DEP will stock several lakes with broodstock Atlantic salmon. This fall, DEP is stocking two lakes, one in western Connecticut (Mount Tom Pond) and one in eastern Connecticut (Crystal Lake). Beach Pond and Mashapaug Lake are the other lakes that have been stocked with broodstock salmon at least once since 2007.
- The regulations for broodstock Atlantic salmon released into lakes and ponds are different from the regulations for salmon on the Naugatuck and Shetucket Rivers. **In each lake, the regulations for methods, seasons and minimum lengths for salmon will be the same as for trout in that specific water body but the daily creel limit will be one salmon per day.** (Please refer to the 2009 CT Angler's Guide for trout regulations).
- **Regulations for broodstock remain the same on the Shetucket and Naugatuck Rivers.** In rivers, angling for Atlantic salmon is restricted to **CATCH-AND-RELEASE ONLY** through November 30. From December 1, 2008, through March 31, 2009, the daily creel limit for Atlantic salmon will be one. During the open season in the rivers, the legal method for taking Atlantic salmon is limited to angling using a single fly, or an artificial lure with a single free swinging hook and no additional weight can be added to the line above the fly or lure.
- On the **Shetucket River**, anglers can fish for salmon downstream from the Scotland Dam (Windham) to the Water Street Bridge in Norwich (the first bridge upstream of Norwich Harbor). The salmon are stocked into one designated Atlantic Salmon Broodstock Area, from the Scotland Dam to the Occum Dam.
- Anglers are allowed to fish for salmon in the **Naugatuck River** from the confluence of the East and West Branches (Torrington) downstream to the Housatonic River (Derby). Anglers may also fish for Atlantic salmon in the Housatonic River downstream of Derby Dam. The salmon are stocked into two designated Atlantic Salmon Broodstock Areas on the Naugatuck River, the "Campville Section" of the upper

Naugatuck River from Route 118 downstream to the Thomaston Flood Control Dam (Litchfield-Thomaston) and the “Beacon Falls Section” of the lower Naugatuck, from Prospect Street (Naugatuck) downstream to Pines Bridge Road (Route 42 bridge, Beacon Falls). **Note that in the Beacon Falls area, DEP will no longer be able to stock the area along the RR tracks in Naugatuck State Forest due to safety concerns.**

- From October 1st through March 31st, fishing for other species in these designated Atlantic Salmon Broodstock Areas is restricted to the gear legal for Atlantic salmon.

TROUT

Fall trout stocking update- DEP stocked over 5,800 adult-size rainbow trout into Amos Lake (300), Bigelow Pond (300), Black Pond (Meriden/Middlefield)(400), Black Pond (Woodstock)(250), Cedar Lake (400), Crystal Lake (1,000), Gardner Lake (1,000), Long Pond (400), Mashapaug Lake (700), Quonnipaug Lake (400) and Rogers Lake (400) earlier this week.

Rivers & streams - Conditions for fishing this weekend will be variable. Flows and temperatures are currently moderate but extended periods of rain and showers are forecast for the next five days. Fall is generally streamer and nymphing time, with late morning and early evening often the best times. White, yellow and brown are good streamer colors, patterns include White Wooly Buggers, Muddlers, Micky Finn, Grey or Black Ghosts (#4-10). Nymphs to bottom bounce include caddis pupa (#14-16), Serendipity (#14-16), Pheasant Tail (#12-20), Prince (#6-18) and Hare’s ear (#8-20). Good reports last week from the Housatonic River, Naugatuck River, Hockanum River, Salmon River and West Branch Farmington River

Farmington River – Fishing has been good, although anglers do have to work a bit. West Branch flows remain clear, moderately low and quite fishable (120 cfs at Riverton, plus an additional 40 cfs from the Still River). Still River inputs may increase, depending on rainfall amounts during the next 4-5 days. Morning water temperatures are in the upper 50’s to 60 °F.

Hatches/patterns include *Isonychia bicolor* (major hatch, #12-14, fast water, afternoon/evening), Blue Wing Olives (*Drunella* & *Baetis* spp., #16-24, mid-late afternoon), Caddis (tan #14-18, all day; green #22-26, evening; summer pupa #18-20 morning), Midges (#22-28, morning), Black Ants (#16-18, mid day in fast water), Flying Ants (#18-22, mid day,) and Golden Stonefly (#16-16).

Housatonic River – Fishing was good to very good last week. Conditions remain good for fishing. Flows are clear, moderate and very fishable, currently 560 cfs at Falls Village and 680 cfs at Gaylordsville. Water temperatures have cooled to the upper 40’s to low upper 50’s °F (mornings). With an extend bout of rain and/or showers forecast, flows may increase this weekend. Anglers may wish to call FirstLight Power at 1-888-417-4837 for updated flow information.

Hatches/patterns include Blue Wing Olive (#18-26, early morning; spinner fall in evening), Leadwing Coachman (#10-12 evening), Cahills/Summer (#12-14), and Brown caddis (#16, early morning & evening), Black/Cinnamon Ants (#14-18, mid day in fast water), Sulfurs (#16-18) and Flying Ants (#16-18, mid day, when windy/humid). Nymphing the pockets, deeper riffles and pool heads will also be productive.

Lakes & Ponds – Fall trout fishing is generally fair to good, with reports from Highland Lake (third basin, look to the edges), Mashapaug Lake, Bigelow Pond, Crystal Lake (Ellington, 4 colors of lead line), Mohawk Pond, East Twin Lake (5 colors) and West Hill Pond.

LARGEMOUTH BASS fishing slowed this past week, with the best reports from Quaddick Reservoir, Moodus Reservoir, Winchester Lake, Wyassup Lake, Mudge Pond, Saugatuck Reservoir and Candlewood Lake. Fair to slow fishing reported from many other areas including Long Pond, Beseck Lake, Gardner Lake, Highland Lake, Mansfield Hollow Reservoir, Hatch Pond, Pachaug Pond, Lake Housatonic, Rogers Lake, Coventry Lake, Halls Pond, Bishop Pond, North Farms Reservoir, Bashan Lake.

SMALLMOUTH BASS - Fair to slow fishing for smallies reported from Gardner Lake, Wyassup Lake, Lake Housatonic, Highland Lake, West Hill Pond, and Mashapaug Lake. Good reports from Candlewood Lake, and anglers are still finding some action in the upper Housatonic River.

NORTHERN PIKE – The fall bite is beginning. Anglers can target Winchester Lake, Pachaug Pond, Mansfield Hollow Reservoir, Quaddick Reservoir and Lake Lillinonah.

WALLEYE fishing is improving, with reports from from Saugatuck Reservoir, Lake Saltonstall and Squantz Pond.

CONNECTICUT RIVER – STRIPED BASS action in the lower river is good just after dark on hickory shad. Recent catches include a 52-incher at the DEP pier. **BLACK CRAPPIE** are still providing some fall action in many coves. Small shiners work well. With water temperatures dropping, **NORTHERN PIKE** fishing is picking up with a number of pike up to about 10 lbs being caught. **CHANNEL CATFISH** continue to provide anglers with some nice action. Fish cut-bait and worms on outside edges of channels and in coves. Some good action for **LARGEMOUTH BASS** in coves and the slower moving areas from just below Hartford to Chapman Pond. A number of nice **CARP** have been caught recently, and with the “Catch-And-Release Professional Carp Tournament Series” 6th annual Tournament of Champions currently (October 13th to 17th) being held from the shores of the CT River in Hartford/East Hartford, there should be some outstanding catches in the Hartford area this week.

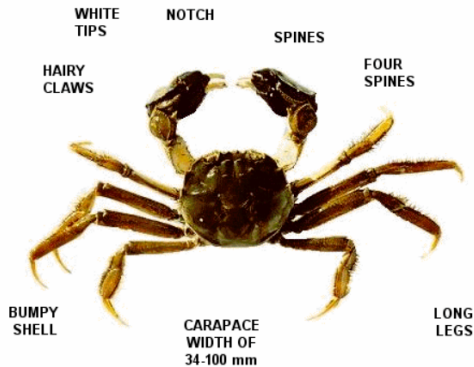
NOTICES:

- “Winter” drawdowns (2-4 feet) of a number of Eastern CT lakes begin this week (October 15th) at **GARDNER LAKE, LOWER BOLTON LAKE, PICKEREL LAKE** and **MASHAPAUG LAKE**, and Drawdowns of **BASHAN LAKE** and **BESECK LAKE** will begin next week.
- **LAKE ZOAR** is scheduled to be drawn down 5-10 feet starting October 17th with refilling scheduled to begin October 25th. **LAKE LILLINONAH** is scheduled to be drawn down 3-5 feet beginning October 24th and ending November 1st.
- To facilitate dam maintenance and repairs, an extensive drawdown of **RAINBOW RESERVOIR** is ongoing and the state boat launch is currently unusable due to the low water levels. Normal operations are expected to resume within one to two weeks.
- **ASPINOOK POND** has been drawn down 30 inches to facilitate dam maintenance. Areas such as the Butts Bridge lot used by many anglers/boaters to access the impoundment may be difficult to impossible to use by trailered boats.
- The **STATE BOAT LAUNCH ON THE HOUSATONIC RIVER IN MILFORD** at the **MOSES WHEELER BRIDGE** area is now closed to public use while bridge reconstruction occurs. This closure is expected to last possibly 8 years.

TIPS & TRICKS: FISH FINDERS -Putting More Fish In The Boat

- ✓ Fish finders are sonar devices that can help anglers to be more productive.
- ✓ Using a fish finder can help you spend more time catching fish and less time looking for them.
- ✓ A fish finder isn't going to make fish jump on your hook, but they can make locating them a whole lot easier.
- ✓ A good fish finder will soon be your best friend when it comes to tracking down that next big catch.
- ✓ These devices use sonar technology to scan beneath your boat and determine the bottom structure and composition, water depth, locate where schools of fish could be hiding, locate reefs, shipwrecks, and other large underwater objects.
- ✓ They can even help identify thermal changes in the water where fish are likely to congregate.
- ✓ They generally consist of an LCD display panel that's mounted topside and a sensor fixed to the bottom of the boat.
- ✓ Finally, you'll want to read the instructions carefully and test the unit out on the water a few times. Like most electronic devices, these fish finders can take a while to get used to, and to understand what you're looking at on the display. But be patient, learn how to read those underwater features, and pretty soon you'll be catching more fish than ever before.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ANGLERS AND ALL OTHER USERS OF OUR AQUATIC RESOURCES- CHINESE MITTEN CRAB ALERT



Please be on the lookout for this invader. Beginning in 2006, a small number of these crabs have been found on the east coast from Maryland to the Hudson River in New York.

Report any sightings to DEP (Inland Fisheries: 860-424-3474, Marine Fisheries: 860-434-6043).

The Chinese mitten crab, a non-native species from East Asia, is a costly and environmentally damaging invader. **THESE CRABS MAY BE FOUND IN BOTH FRESHWATER AND SALT WATER.** They are walking crabs that can emerge from the water to move upstream of barriers and are capable of moving several hundred miles upstream from saltwater. They spend most of their lives in freshwater rivers, migrating to brackish or salt water to reproduce.

MARINE FISHING REPORT



Water temperatures in Long Island Sound (LIS) range from 60 to 65 °F. Check out the following web sites for more detailed water temperatures and marine boating conditions:

<http://www.mysound.uconn.edu/stationstat.html>

http://marine.rutgers.edu/mrs/sat_data/?nothumbs=1

<http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/>

<http://www.wunderground.com/MAR/AN/330.html>

STRIPED BASS fishing is good to excellent with many large bass (40 pounds and larger) being taken in the recent week. The approaching *October New Moon on the 18th* should provide anglers with the best striper action, with many opportunities to catch a large “cow” bass. The bait of choice for trophy size “linesiders” (40 pounds and larger) are eels, hickory shad, bunker, butterfish and chunks of menhaden. The best times are during dawn and dusk, including nighttime and daytime periods of overcast low light conditions. The Race, Long Sand Shoal and Outer Bartletts being the hot spots, loaded with striped bass in the mid-30 inch to low 50-inch range. Other fishing locations include the Watch Hill reefs, Ram Island Reef (Fishers Island Sound), the Sluiceway, Plum Gut, inner Bartlett Reef, Hatchett Reef, Crane Reef, Connecticut River between the Baldwin Bridge and the Amtrak RR Bridge, Southwest Reef, Sixmile Reef, the reefs off Branford, Charles Island to Milford Point, the Norwalk Islands and the reefs off Stamford. Three 50 plus pound trophy striped bass were landed this week. Please use circle hooks to avoid gut-hooked fish. Large “cow” bass are susceptible to hooking mortality from stress. See page 41 of the *CT Angler’s Guide for tips on Catch & Release Fishing*.

These large striped bass are very important fish, providing superior genetics (offspring), which maintains a healthy striped population and fishing for years to come.

BLUEFISH the best action of the 2009 season with larger “Alligator Blues” showing up and feeding voraciously on prey (butterfish, menhaden and hickory shad) fish. Fishing is consistent throughout LIS. Hot spots include the Race, Long Sand Shoal, Milford Harbor to Greenwich Point Park, with many “alligators” in the 8-15 pound category. Bluefish in the mid-20’s to low 30 inch range can be caught off the major current breaks during the day. Other good fishing locations include the Sluiceway, Plum Gut, Bartlett Reef, Hatchett Reef, Connecticut River between the Baldwin Bridge and the Amtrak RR Bridge (incoming tide), New Haven Harbor, Milford Harbor, Lower Thames River, and lower Housatonic River. Bunker (chunks) and fish-imitating lures are providing fast and furious action with many anglers coming home with great memories, along with sore and tired arms.

HICKORY SHAD (“Connecticut Tarpon”) fishing remains good in the Niantic River and fair in the Connecticut River (CT DEP dock and Baldwin Bridge fishing pier) and Clinton Harbor. Incoming tides are best. Shad approaching 20 inches have been caught on willowleaves, shad darts and leadhead jigs with plastic curly tails. Chartreuse, white and copper are the colors of choice. Go out and enjoy some great shore-based fishing action.

BLACKFISH is rated good. Fish weighing 4-12 pounds are common with a few bruisers weighing 15 pounds have been landed. Look for “Reef Bullies” in shallower water (10-20 ft) near structure (reefs). Hermit crabs, green crabs, Japanese (Asian shore) crabs and conch are your best bets to score. Patience and mobility is the key with these finicky fish.

BLACK SEA BASS fishing is rated good at any of the major and minor (smaller) reefs and wrecks in Long Island Sound. Fish weighing 2-4 pounds are common with a few “bucketmouths” weighing in at 6 pounds have been taken this week. Popular spots include Norwalk Islands, Stratford Shoal/Middle Grounds, Charles Island, Townshend Ledge, Branford Reef, Brown’s Reef, Faulkner’s Island, Kimberly Reef, Ram Island Reef, lower Thames River, Southwest Reef and Black Point in Niantic. Hermit and green crabs, squid strips, peanut bunker and conch are your baits of choice to catch this prized gamefish. Its white flesh is excellent eating.

ATLANTIC BONITO/LITTLE TUNNY are off Watch Hill and the eastern tip of Fishers Island, Wilderness Point, the Race, Pine Island, and Millstone Point to Pleasure Beach.

BLUE CRAB - Crabbing is rated good, after a few years of low catches. Get them before they head-off into deeper water and migrate south. Any tidal creek, (especially the lower Connecticut River) along the coastline is offering some good opportunities and family fun crabbing for these tasty morsels. Look for “Jimmies” (male crabs) further inshore up tidal creeks, into freshwater. Female crabs (“Lemon Bellies”) will be found in the estuary along the coastline.

Just as a reminder, blue crab regulations are as follows: Open season is from May 1-November 30; minimum size is 5 inches for hard shell and 3 1/2 inches for soft shell measured across carapace from spike tip to spike tip. Possession of uncooked blue crabs without the body shell attached is prohibited and only two claws per body may be possessed. Blue crabs measuring less than the minimum size and all egg bearing females must be returned to the water unharmed. Legal method of take is by scoop net, hand line/trot line, star crab trap and circular topless trap not exceeding 26 inches in diameter, and semi circular cylindrical trap 12 inches or less in diameter. Crabbing gear must be attended at all times.

Remember to check the 2009 Connecticut Angler’s Guide for tidal information (page 52) and pages 49-51 for saltwater trophy fish award information. For regulation updates, please check our website www.ct.gov/dep/fishing



DEP WEEKLY FISHING REPORT
CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
79 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106
www.ct.gov/dep