

# CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: April 6, 2010



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/r5cnc](http://www.fws.gov/r5cnc). For more information about Atlantic salmon, visit the Connecticut River Salmon Association at [www.ctriversalmon.org](http://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)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0*	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0***	0	0
Moulson Pond (Eightmile)	0	-	100s	0	0	0	0***	0	-
Mary Steube <sup>+</sup> (Mill Brook)	-	-	?	-	-	-	-	-	-
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	0/0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turners Falls (Connecticut- MA)	0/0	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	-	0
Wilder (Connecticut- VT)	0/0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
Other (all sites)	0/0								
<b>TOTALS=</b>	<b>0/0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0++</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
(last year's totals)	74/10	161,095	-----	39++	67	649	21,403	5	5,602

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:

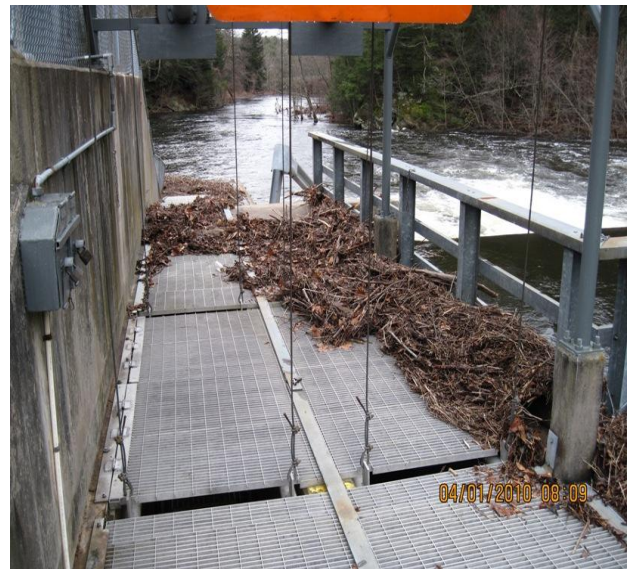
The story of the week—of the entire spring so far—is the rain. The Connecticut River was at 90,000 cfs, which is higher than normal. It has dropped down to 60,000, which is high but a level more often seen. It is still too high to operate the Holyoke Fishlift and that has not opened yet but it is also not missing much yet. We have not heard any reports of shad yet and the alewife run (which is coming on strong) doesn't reach Holyoke. However, the local rivers are warming up fast and with 80 degree weather around the corner, the shad could be arriving soon. Shad enter their home rivers when they reach 50 F (10 C). Many of the tributaries are above 10 now. The river is also full of flood-borne debris (logs, sticks, etc.) so it will be tough on the shad netters.

We plan to open the Rainbow Fishway for the season next week but are waiting (once again) on the headgate. It was repaired last year but in the fall, a contractor doing work on the dam messed it up again and now we are waiting for them to return and fix it. Flows on the Farmington River are still quite high. I intend to open the Leesville Fishway this afternoon. That fishway was overtopped by the flood and lots of debris deposited onto it. Our field crew has cleaned it up and it should be ready for operation later today. I hope to have time to snorkel and look for alewives as well as spawning white sucker and a bunch of tessellated darters. The ice control structure has collected a ton of debris from the flood. Moulson Pond Fishway is open and passing alewives. A pretty strong wave arrived yesterday. Much of the fishway went underwater during the floods but with no apparent harm. Valinn with the Lyme Land Conservation Trust reports striped bass are already in the lower Eightmile River.

We are beginning salmon fry stocking today—earlier than planned due to the warm weather. The fry at the Tripps Streamside Incubation Facility have developed faster than normal due to the warm weather and we must get them out ASAP to prevent them from starving. Some will go into the Salmon River watershed today and we'll get the rest out into the Eightmile tomorrow. We plan to stock salmon smolts into the Farmington River next week. They will be coming from the Eisenhower National Fish Hatchery (formerly Pittsford National Fish Hatchery) in Vermont.



The exit to the Ed Bills Fishway under water during the flood.



Accumulated debris on top of the Leesville Fishway after the flood.

## OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

<b>FISHWAY (RIVER)</b>	<b>AMER. SHAD</b>	<b>ALEWIFE</b>	<b>BLUEBACK HERRING</b>	<b>GIZZARD SHAD</b>	<b>STRIPED BASS</b>	<b>SEA LAMPREY</b>	<b>SEA-RUN TROUT</b>	<b>AMER. EEL</b>
<b>Greeneville*</b> (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Taftville*</b> (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Occum*</b> (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Versailles Pond</b> (Little R., Sprague)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Tunnel*</b> (Quinebaug R., Preston)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Kinneytown*</b> (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Whitfords Brook</b> (Whitfords Br., Groton)	0	no report						
<b>Trading Cove Brook</b> (Trading Cove Br., Montville)		fishway destroyed in flood						
<b>Latimers Brook+</b> (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)		470						
<b>Gorton Pond</b> (Pattagansett R., E.Lyme)		present (not enumerated)						
<b>Brides Brook**</b> (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		15,497						
<b>Fishing Brook</b> (Fishing Br., O.Saybrook)		<50						
<b>Capello Pond**</b> (East River, Guilford)		<1,000						
<b>Branford Supply Pond Dam**</b> (Queach Br., Branford)		0						
<b>Clarks Pond</b> (Indian R., Milford)		no report						
<b>Bunnells Pond</b> (Pegonnock R., Bridgeport)		no report						
<b>Wood Dam**</b> (Saugatuck R., Westport)		?						
<b>Mianus River Pond**</b> (Mianus R., Greenwich)		16,366	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.*

**\*\***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:

The alewives showed up on schedule, about March 12. After that, the run accelerated coastwide and are now everywhere. The Bride Brook run is running neck to neck with the run at Mianus Pond Fishway (see above). We're seeing fish through Capellos and Lower Guilford Lake in Guilford, going up Fishing Brook fishway in Old Saybrook, at Mary Steube in Old Lyme and perhaps even above Upper Millpond already. In East Lyme, they are thick not only at Bride but also Gorton Pond Fishway (Pattagansett), and Latimers Brook. Conservation Officers have already pinched poachers at Poquenatuck Brook. We have not yet been able to check streams in far eastern New London County but assume they are in at Whitfords Brook and the vicinity. We will be going to the west tomorrow and expect to open Kinneytown and get the counting going at the Wood Dam in the Saugatuck where Ron Merley has already reported alewives. A new wrinkle this year is our "rotating fish counter". Save the Sound purchased another electronic fish counter that will rotate among sites. This year it will be at the Capello Pond Fishway in Guilford and you can see that new addition to the list above. Next year it will be somewhere else.

The floods have caused us havoc and we don't know the full extent of the damage yet. However, the Trading Cove Brook Fishway in Montville was seriously damaged when floodwaters ripped the lower ramp off the resting pool and washed it downstream. That fishway, which was successfully passing lots of alewives and sea-run trout, will be out of action for the entire season. Similarly, the successful eel pass at the Greeneville Dam (Shetucket River, Norwich) was washed away and will have to be replaced later in the year. The Hyde Pond Fishway on Whitfords Brook is located just upstream of Old Mystic where the bridge washed out and while we think the fishway is okay, we are concerned that the dam may have been badly damaged and might affect the fishway's performance.

Another project has been the replacement of the old rusting pipes at the mouth of Bride Brook at Rocky Neck State Park in East Lyme. These failing pipes have been a source of concern for years and Save the Sound was able to get some economic stimulus money to replace the pipes with an open channel designed to help alewives get upstream and help restore the salt marshes. Co-sponsored by the Parks Division, the project is just now wrapping up, with the fish running up the next structure. The ribbon cutting will be April 19<sup>th</sup>. For a video clip of the new outlet during the flood flows visit YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcO8txdEHf4>.

Glass eels just showed up today for the first time at our Fishing Brook index site trap and that run will just continue.



*The crew has a "holy crap" moment while looking at the lower section of the Trading Cove Brook fishway, washed 200 feet downstream of the dam in Montville. The lower three sections of steeppasses broke off and will need to be replaced. Left to right: Bruce Williams, Tim Wildman, Dave Ellis.*



*At Rocky Neck, alewives used to have to struggle thru two small pipes to get into Bride Brook. With this new project, they now can use an open channel except for a short culvert that allows beach goers to get across the brook. Construction Supervisor Deb Corcoran of the DEP/Engineering looks on. Fishway. The wooden gate to close the fishway is resting on top of the fishway. One can see the stone façade added to cover the concrete walls.*