

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: April 13, 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. 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	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 ⁺ (Mill Brook)	-	-	18	-	-	-	-	-	-
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								
TOTALS=	0/0	0	9	0++	0	0	0	0	0
(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:

Spring weather in southern New England is always interesting. We are just drying out from the rain and get hit with record warm temperatures. In some places, small tributaries reached 70 degrees F (21 C), a level often not reached until May! Now, we are hearing frost alerts and even the possibility of snow in the northwest hills. While that is not good news for the flowering trees (the Leesville shadbush is blooming), it is probably good news for the fish runs. Having the water warm up too quickly compresses the runs and typically fish are not able to get as far upstream before they spawn—at least the shad and river herring. Unseasonably warm weather also creates stress on out-migrating salmon smolts and makes stocking salmon fry difficult.

We stocked the available hatchery-reared smolts out of Eisenhower National Fish Hatchery (Pittsford, VT) yesterday—actually last night. We are trying night stocking. This may help combat predation but recent research also suggests that night stocking may help hatchery-reared smolts set their migratory pattern more in tune with what the wild smolts do. This stocking was in the Farmington River and went well. It was scheduled for March 30 when the floods struck so was postponed until this week—a wise decision, I think. We also had to advance the stocking of the salmon fry out of the Tripp Streamside Incubation Facility in Old Lyme due to the unseasonably warm water temperature that accelerated the fish's development. They were stocked into the Eightmile River watershed and portions of the Salmon River watershed. Stocking of the Farmington River watershed begins this week. Thanks to the volunteers who have been helping.

The smolt bypass around the Rainbow Dam was opened today and there are cormorants in the headpond, indicating that wild smolts have arrived. Workers will arrive at the Rainbow Fishway tomorrow to fix the fishway's headgate and we hope to have the fishway open either late Wednesday or Thursday. Leesville is operating and passing lots of (large) white suckers. Flows on these tributaries have dropped down to normal levels. The Connecticut River flows went from very high (90,000 cfs) to below normal for this time of year (38,000) very quickly. The flow is still a bit high to open the Holyoke Dam Fishlift and at this time, we expect that to be opened sometime next week. No word about the opening of the West Springfield Fishway on the Westfield River. Still no word on shad in the river. The mainstem Connecticut is still a lot cooler than the tributaries and Leesville was down to 13.7 C (~57 F) by yesterday afternoon, so it could be still too cool for shad. Bob Sadzinski of the Maryland Dept. Nat. Resources reports that shad arrived early (April 7) at the Conowingo Dam on the Susquehanna River.

The alewives are running at Mary Steube but the counter was put in a little late so the data shown does not include the entire run, to date. There have been strong runs at Moulson Pond on the Eightmile and I saw a handful at Leesville last week when I snorkeled, so by now the alewives are probably past Hartford—along with the stripers. Observations at Moulson and Leesville indicate other non-diadromous species are actively running and spawning, including white suckers, yellow perch, and tessellated darters.



The Rathbun Dam (upstream of the Moulson Pond fishway on the Eightmile River) in Lyme. There's normally about a 20 foot gap between the bridge and the water surface below.



Vaccinating young salmon at the Eisenhower Nat'l Fish Hatchery in Vermont last October. These fish were stocked out into the Farmington River yesterday as part of the 2010 smolt release..

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	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
Versailles Pond (Little R., Sprague)	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
Whitfords Brook (Whitfords Br., Groton)	0	no report						
Trading Cove Brook (Trading Cove Br., Montville)	fishway destroyed in flood							
Latimers Brook+ (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	1,339							
Gorton Pond (Pattagansett R., E.Lyme)	present (not enumerated)							
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)	32,738							
Fishing Brook (Fishing Br., O.Saybrook)	<50							704
Capello Pond** (East River, Guilford)	<1,000							
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)	395							
Bunnells Pond (Pegonnock R., Bridgeport)	100's							
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)	? (counter malfunction- working to fix it and re-install)							
Mianus River Pond** (Mianus R., Greenwich)	27,918		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 fishways on the Shetucket River are still not opened due to high water—except for Occum, which opened a few days ago. Norwich Public Utilities is rushing a repair of a motor and hopes to open Greenville any day. Good numbers of alewives have been seen below the dam. Kinneytown over on the Naugatuck was opened this week and immediately started passing white suckers. We expect to have count data by next week's report. We also hope to have count data for the Capello Pond Fishway by next week. Ted Gardziel (TU) reports alewives in the Lower Guilford Lake Fishway, just upstream of Capello Pond. Dave Post at Yale believes that the run at Branford Water Supply Pond Fishway is 2-3 weeks early. (Gail Wippelhauser of Maine DMR reports alewife runs in Maine to be about a month early.) We have no counter at Bunnells Pond but Greg Dancho of the Beardsley Park Zoo reports hundreds around the entrance of the fishway and evidence of gorging by herons. Runs have been strong in New London County and you can see the number rising at Bride Brook. Last week we had one night that 9,000 alewives came upstream. The project at the mouth of Bride Brook at Rocky Neck State Park is done and we'll be there next Monday to celebration the project. The run at Mianus is going strong, too. If you have QuickTime on your computer and want to check out the FishCam at the Mianus Pond Fishway, visit the Town of Greenwich's website at:

http://www.greenwichct.org/ConservationCommission/cc_Mianus_Fishway.asp

The Bronx River is in New York, not Connecticut, but we follow their efforts to restore alewives to that Long Island Sound tributary with great interest. Marit Larson reports that NYC Parks and Recreation has captured their first alewife of the season below the 182nd Street Dam.

The eel count for Fishing Brook index site trap includes mostly glass eels.

The DEP's Anglers' Guide was late getting distributed this year but is now out and can be obtained wherever you buy fishing licenses. Of course you can now buy fishing licenses on-line at the DEP website, so in order to get your Anglers' Guide, you may want to go on-line for that, too at:

http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2696&q=322688&depNav_GID=1630

The guide not only gives information on the regulations for fishing in fresh and salt waters of Connecticut, but also provides information on programs of the Inland Fisheries and Marine Fisheries divisions and on things like fishing below fishways, etc.

FEATURED FISHWAY OF THE WEEK: Vargas Pond Fishway, Stony Brook, Stonington- built: fall of 2009.



Vargas Pond Fishway on Stony Brook in Stonington. This aluminum 2 ft wide Denil was built and installed by the Town with technical assistance from our program. The pond was an old ice pond and the pond and land is now a conservation area owned by the Town. Thankfully, the fishway survived the recent floods, which hit Stonington particularly hard.



A 'fish-eye view' of the Denil fishway. This should be a cakewalk for alewives to ascend and spawn in the pond above. A great job by the Town and its fabricator in making this fishway.